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EGA/VGA SEE PAGE 16 FOR FULL INSTRUCTIONS

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- * Battle Isle 2
- * Microcosm
- * MegaRace

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MAY 1994

ISSUE 14

PLAY
SEMINALITY
TRUMPS*

*The saddest game
in the universe

EXCLUSIVE!

Seawolf

LEADER OF THE PACK!

THE JOY OF STICKS

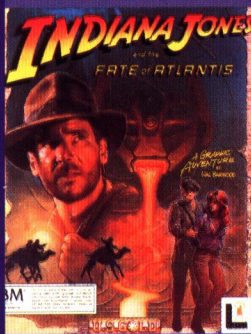
+++DEFINITIVE
8 PAGE JOYSTICK
FEATURE INSIDE



2 HD

DOUBLE CAPACITY DISKS





“Fate of Atlantis is simply brilliant.”

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This best selling graphic adventure tests your grey matter with some of the toughest puzzles ever. As enemies prepare to blast the civilised world, one man stands in their way. The man with the hat . . .

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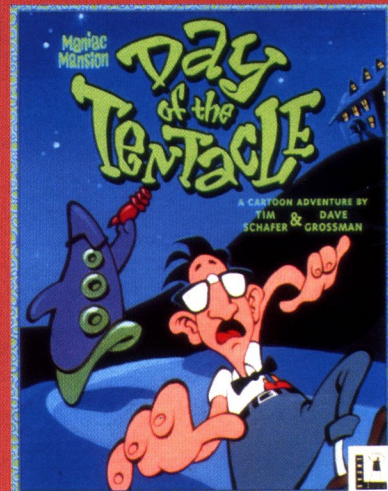
and the FATE OF ATLANTIS™

“If a better adventure game shows up this year, I'll eat my trousers.”
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A sequel to the award winning classic 'Maniac Mansion', this wacky cartoon adventure has set new standards in graphics and sound, with over 100 zany effects. See it. Hear it. Play it.

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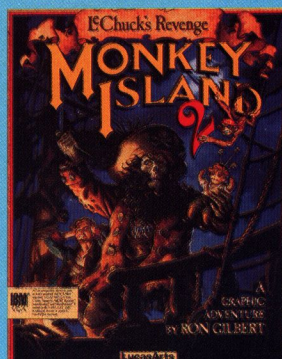
hard milk will come out of your nose!

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“... lashings of hilarious animation . . . superb graphic detail. This is the only reason you need for owning a PC.”

PC Format 91%.



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Which are the most influential games of all time? We put our cards on the table.

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dir.ectory

REVIEWS

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TAKE COMMAND of the US Navy's most deadly predator in this outstanding modern day submarine simulation.

46 Righteous Fire

THE FUTURE BURNS BRIGHT for fans of *Privateer* with this new mission disk.

48 Fantastic Dizzy

CAN DIZZY MAKE a smooth transition from console to PC or will he get egg on his face?

50 Cannon Fodder

LEAVE YOUR MORALS at home and indulge in some lighthearted bloodletting courtesy of Sensible Software.

54 D/Generation

A PC CLASSIC now in a Windows incarnation.

58 Merchant Prince

TRADE YOUR WAY to wealth, fame and perhaps even a Papal nomination.

60 Excellent Games

A COMPILATION that really lives up to its name.

61 Award Winners

SENSIBLE SOCCER and *Zool* in the same pack. Surely too good to be true.

62 Championship Manager

ONE OF THE PREMIER football management games transfers to Windows.

64 NFL Pro League Football

THINK YOUR WAY to victory as manager of a top American Football team..

70 Unnecessary Roughness

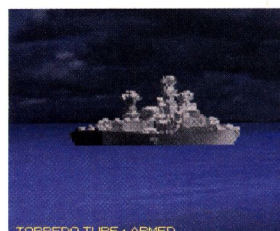
IF THINKING ISN'T YOUR scene then get stuck in with this American Football arcade game.

72 Airlines

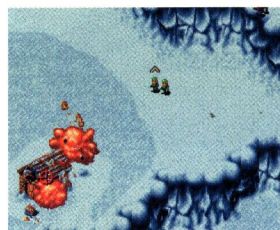
HAVE YOU GOT what it takes to be the next Branson? (Beards are optional)

74 Red Crystal

AN RPG WITH a difference - this one has a two player mode.



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Cannon Fodder
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Arena: The Elder
Scrolls PAGE 86



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PC ZONE

19 Bolsover St,
London W1P 7HJ.
Tel: 071 631 1433
Fax: 071 436 1321

Editor Paul Lakin; Art Editor
Duncan Y. Hemphill; Deputy Editor
Laurence Scottford; Technical
Editor Mark Burgess; Production
Editor Kirsty Fortune; Contributors
Chris Anderson, Simon Bradley,
Charlie Brooker, Andy Clerkson,
Duncan MacDonald, David
McCandless, Patrick McCarthy, Ian
Jackson (Design), Marco Crisari
(Design); Publisher Tim Ponting;
Subscriptions Hotline 0454
620070; Senior Sales Executive
Saul Leese 071 631 1433;
Advertising Sales Executive Mike
Shepherd; Group Advertising
Manager Phil Jennings;
Advertising Production Manager
Jenni Wood; Group Production
Manager Simon Maggs; Assistant
Group Production Manager Mike
Robinson Origination Ebony 0579
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Heron; Newstrade Manager James
Burnay; Distribution SM Magazine
Distribution 081 677 8111; Mail
Order Manager Julia French;
Publishing Director Bruce
Sawford; Circulation Director
Sean Farmer; Creative Director
Jimmy Egerton; Non-Executive
Director Dick Pontain; Financial
Director Ian Leggatt; Managing
Director Alistair Ramsay;
Chairman Felix Dennis

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PPA

Stuck for a stick? Then check out our special feature.

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PC ZONE

100% GAMES

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82 In Extremis

SHOOT, SHOOT AND then shoot some more in the latest first person er... shoot 'em up.

84 Johnny Quest

ANOTHER CARTOON HERO seeks fame and fortune as a game star.

86 Arena: The Elder Scrolls

FROM THE COMPANY which brought you *Terminator Rampage* comes the latest pretender to the *Ultima Underworld* crown.

90 Starlord

FEUDALISM MEETS FUTURISM in a space based game of chicanery, commerce and combat.

BLUEPRINT

36 Club Manager

MIXING IN DEPTH AI with detailed strategy and arcade style highlights *Club Manager* is looking to be one of the year's most exciting football management releases.

Paul Lakin takes a suitcase of money up the A1 to meet the developers.



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BIG ONES, SMALL ONES, red ones and blue ones, Simon Bradley provides the definitive guide to the ever expanding world of joysticks.

94 Turning Up Trumps

PLAY YOUR WAY INTO PERSPECTIVE as David McCandless brings you a guide to the history of PC games which is also a game (In a sad, day after Christmas kind of way).

REGULARS

6 Bulletin

EIGHT PAGES OF THE latest news from the games industry, plus a look at (or listen to) some of the latest soundcards.

16 Cover Disk Guide

THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL double disk is crammed with goodies covering virtually every game genre you can think of. Don't even think of playing them until you've checked out all the info on these pages.

105 CD-ROM Reviews

THE SECTION THAT JUST keeps on growing. This month there's strategy from *Battle Isle 2*, shoot 'em up action from *Microcosm* and the talkie version of *Gabriel Knight*.

118 Bits & PCs

OUR IN HOUSE DOCTOR puts his thermometer to your CPU and shines a thin light into the depths of your CONFIG.SYS before diagnosing technical hiccups.

120 Troubleshooter

PART TWO OF OUR SERIAL of solutions to some of the toughest games around, including *Hand Of Fate*, *Leisure Suit Larry 6*, *Star Trek: Judgement Rites*, *Alone In The Dark 2* and *Sam And Max*.

128 Wordprocessor

THE PEN IS MIGHTIER than the sword, so here's your chance to perform literary execution.

131 Off The Boards

A COMPLETE ROUND UP of the latest Shareware and PD plus a voyage into the mysterious world of Numerology and Tarot.

136 Mail Order

GET YOUR BACK ISSUES and shareware without getting out of your chair.

138 Mr Cursor

SOMEWHAT SPOOKY speculations about super groups and the sex life of the octopus.

BONUS!



From tank battles to spider webs. Four great games on two disks. DETAILS P.16



Bulletin

+ Following the end of the cold war, more and more programming talent is emerging from Eastern European countries. Flatliners Design a Budapest based development group, is one of the rising stars and is about to amaze the world with one of the first high-resolution role-playing games.

Hungary for Adventure

THE SEVENTH SWORD OF MENDOR sounds like many other RPGs, it has a plot like many other RPGs. Where *Mendor* is different is that it doesn't look like many other RPGs. The reason is that the design team have rejected the standard

300x200 256 colour mode in favour of a higher resolution mode. This means that the team have been able to make the graphics incredibly detailed.

The game is set in the world of Grymordia. It is a world of two continents, Arcurann and Wonghar. After a series of past wars the gods united the

people of Arcurann by giving them seven swords. As long as the seven swords remained together then Arcurann would be protected from attack by the evil hordes of Wonghar. Now, however, a strong ruler in Wonghar has stolen one of the seven swords. Your task is to retrieve it before Arcurann is invaded.

The action is split between 3D displays in the spirit of *Dungeon Master* for the towns, dungeons and wilderness and 2D artwork

when you encounter certain characters or situations.

Like most other RPGs you must assemble a party of characters before you begin your quest. This party consists of six people, all of whom are directly under your control. Watch out for the character portraits which have been digitised from 1970's fashion

catalogues. You may also recruit a seventh member, a non-player character who is controlled by the computer. This seventh person can and will change during the course of the game and may prove to be either a friend or foe.

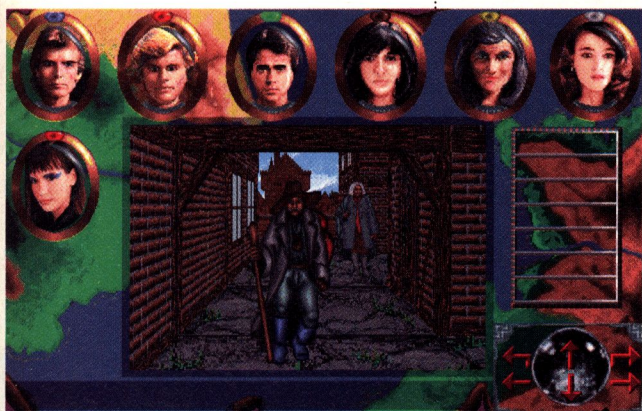
The actions your characters perform will ultimately determine their personality. So they will become established as good or evil, brave or cowardly, and this will influence their capabilities and interaction with other characters in the future.

Characters are skilled in three areas covering 22 different abilities: weapons, magic and lore. Magic is divided into three types: white magic, black magic and priest magic. This allows for a more complex spell system, which is made even more

sophisticated by the ability to combine two different spells to create a third spell. The combat system is perhaps the most complex there has ever been in a computer RPG. The amount of damage you do, for example, is dependent not only on the type of weapon, but also its sharpness, your strength, your remaining hit points, any magic that has been applied to it, your ability with that particular weapon, and a little bit of luck.

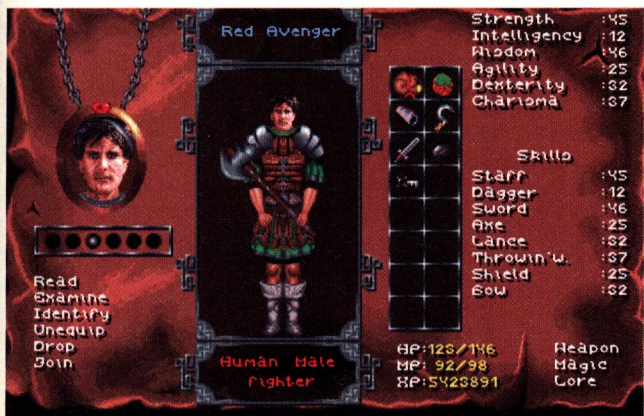
All in all the game has about 90,000 locations which are spread out across a huge area of 25 dungeon levels and six cities. The designers have calculated there are about 130 to 150 hours of play to be had out of the game. Phew!

The *Seventh Sword of Mendor* will be from Grandslam.



(Above) The exterior city scenes are more detailed than those found in most RPGs in the *Dungeon Master* vein.

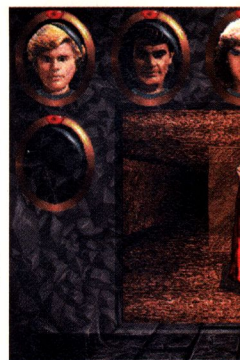
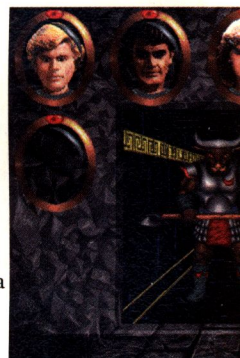
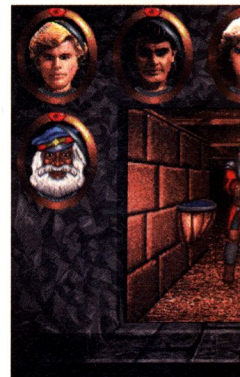
(Below) The character screen changes as you acquire new equipment.



Naturally some of the creatures you will encounter are based on popular mythological creatures like this dragon ...



...and the common-or-garden dwarf. Others, like the scorpion creature below, are new to the worlds of *Mendor*.





These two look like a friendly pair of covers. Wonder if they'll tell us the way to the nearest exit? We have to get Captain Birdseye out of here somehow...



Notice the heads digitised from the 1970's fashion catalogue. Except for the minotaur that is - which probably came from Livestock Review '73, and below, from Penthouse.



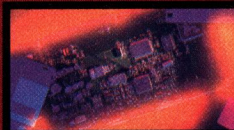
Sound Blaster Rival

Upgrade Options, Datrontech's recently established multimedia division, has released a 16-bit sound card with a CD-ROM drive interface. The Media Vision Pro Sonic 16 has 16-bit stereo, simultaneous playback and record with four to one sound compression, MIDI interface and full Sound Blaster compatibility. It has a Panasonic CD-ROM interface and comes bundled with a set of Pocket tools. This includes Pocket

Recorder, an OLE compatible Windows application for recording in 8 or 16-bit; Pocket Mixer, an easy to use program to set your soundcard, and Pocket CD, which means you can play audio CDs.

The card also contains the Yamaha YMF262 (OPL-3) 20 voice synthesiser with four operator FM sounds and 16-bit FM DAC. Mixing can combine the internal synthesiser, digital audio, CD audio, external line in and microphone. Frequency response is 30Hz - 20 KHz. The card needs a 386SX or better, DOS 3.0 or later and Windows. 4Mb RAM recommended.

'At last we have a card to rival the Sound Blaster range,' says Product Manager John Davis, 'a 16-bit card for 8-bit pricing.' Indeed. The RRP of the card is a mere £89. Upgrade Options are on 0252 316 060.



DISPATCHES

+++ Watch out for the full version of *Doom* coming from Imagineer in September. The people who did *Wolfenstein 3D* for the SNES will be bringing us *Doom* later this year. No further details or prices at the moment.

+++ Kevin Keegan Football Manager, which has been out on the SNES for a year, is about to arrive on the PC. The scheduled release date is March 25 1994 and the price will probably be £29.99. Contact Anco on 0322 292 513.

+++ It looks like the console market is at last imploding. The massive discounting by retailers of *Sonic 3* reflect both consumer resistance and the fact that demand for console games has flattened out. Another straw in the wind is the sale of *Sega Zone* to the publisher Maverick. *Sega Zone* was bought by Future from Dennis less than a year ago. The latest reshuffle leaves three *Zone* magazines with three different publishers.

+++ Orchid has reduced the price of its double-spin CDS-3110 CD drive from £189 to £169. The CDS-3110 has a transfer rate of 300 kb a second and can play audio CDs without any extra software. The cards support both Sony and Mitsumi interface formats. Orchid can be contacted on 0256 479 898.

+++ Microsoft has had to pay Stac electronics \$120 million. A Los Angeles court decided that Microsoft's *DoubleSpace*, the disk compression utility in MS DOS 6, had infringed Stac's patents. However it's not a case of smiles all round at Stac since it has been found guilty and fined \$13.6 million - for reverse engineering a version of *Stacker* that could work with MS DOS 6. Microsoft will now drop *DoubleSpace* from DOS 6. Both companies are expected to appeal against the verdicts.

+++ A New Jersey man is in trouble for shooting his computer. 'I can't understand why I can't shoot my own computer in my own home,' he protested. The police pointed out that he was using illegal hollow nose rounds and that his gun was unregistered. Then they nicked him.

More hours to play
More characters
More backgrounds
More 3-D objects
More animations



but you're still...

ALONE IN THE DARK 2

HELP!, HELP!, HELP!, HELP!, HELP!, HELP!, HELP!

If you need to shed some light on Alone in the Dark 1 or 2

CALL 0891 244444

Calls cost 36p per minute cheap rate, 48p at all other times (maximum cost £3.60).

Please get permission from the person paying the bill. The above information is correct at time of publication (Feb 1994).

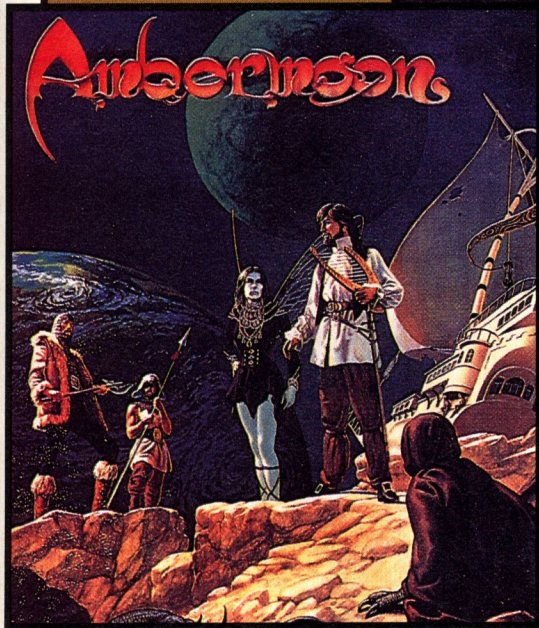
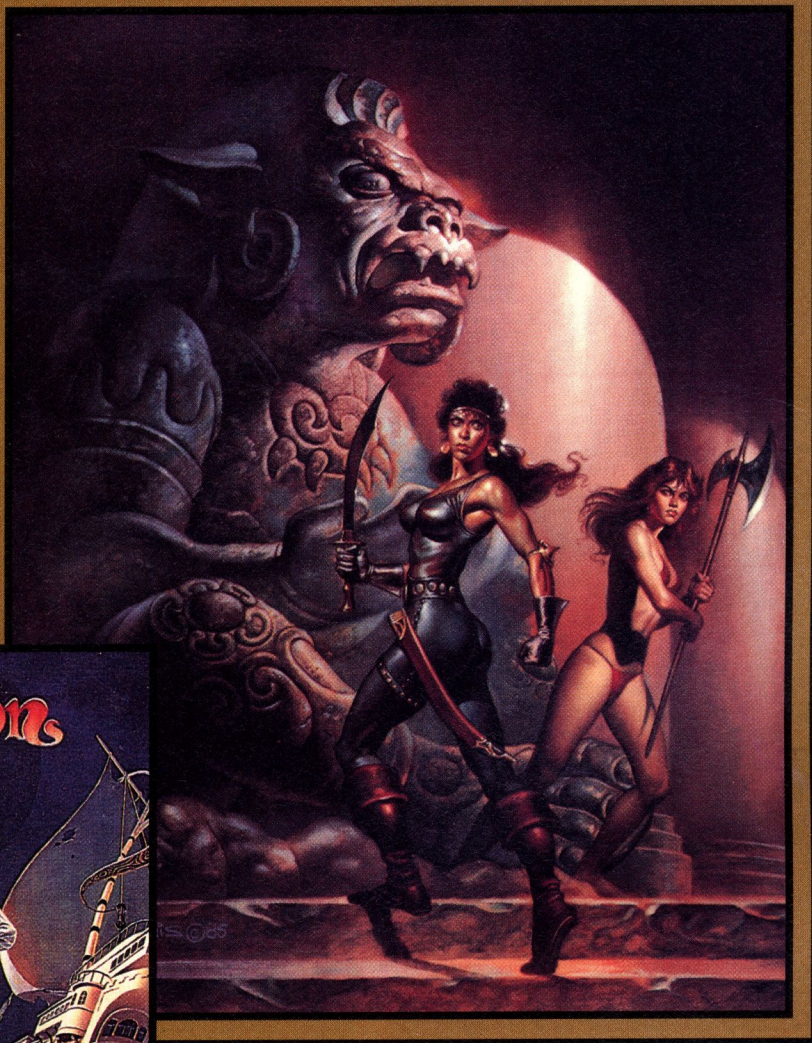


Infogrames Ltd, 14 Smedley St, Clapham, London, SW4 6PF
Tel: 071-738 8199

Bulletin

It's art, honest!

Do you like looking at pictures of scantily clad women with huge breasts and names like Silk and Skyfox? If so you'll be interested to hear that Paper Tiger, fantasy art specialists, are releasing some new books featuring the art of David Delamare, Danny Flynn and Boris Vallejo. Paper Tiger is also issuing six 'miniature' collections of the work of Rodney Matthews, Patrick Woodroffe, Boris Vallejo, Jim Burns, Tim White and Bruce Pennington for £3.99 each. Paper Tiger is on 071 976 5477



Ambermoon

Ambermoon is, logically enough, Thalion's follow up to *Amberstar*. It's a large-scale RPG which mixes a traditional top down viewpoint with a first person perspective 3D dungeon system. The game boasts a playing area three times the size of that in *Amberstar*. As you travel this area you'll get the chance to indulge in loads of magic spells and character interaction. The Amiga version of the game has already received rave reviews in the European press. The PC version will work on any 286 or higher and should be out in May at £39.99. Thalion are on 021 449 4464.

DISPATCHES

+++ FAST (the Federation Against Software Piracy) has brought the first successful private prosecution for software piracy. David McMillan pleaded guilty to seven counts under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. McMillan, a former sergeant in the army, sold pirated business software through a computer magazine. It included programs from Norton and WordPerfect. More than 1,000 programs with a street value of over £100,000 were seized in a raid at his home in Yorkshire. 'There is a growing awareness of the criminality of software theft throughout the courts,' says Robin Lawrence, operations manager at FAST. 'Software criminals run the risk of substantial fines and up to ten years imprisonment for their chosen career.' Mr McMillan was fined £1,279.

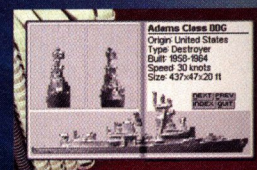
+++ LIVE '94, the consumer electronics show, comes to Earls Court between September 20 and 25 this year. Included amongst the many events will be live concerts, a games arena, a PC village, live broadcasts, the young newspaper competition and the National Youth Rock and Pop Awards. Last year's show attracted 140,821 visitors, 90% of whom said they would visit again. So they need 14,082 to make up numbers.



Sound Off

Silica has launched a new PC card that offers full 16-bit sound and interface for three popular sorts of CD-ROM Drive. The sound card is the Sound Galaxy Basic 16 compatible with Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, MS Windows Sound System, Convex Speech Thing and Disney Sound Source. The CD-ROM interface is for Panasonic and Mitsumi with the option to upgrade to Sony. The card can be made General MIDI compatible with an upgrade and costs £99 + VAT from Silica, 081 309 1111.

THEY CAN'T SEE YOU. THEY CAN'T HEAR YOU.
OFFICIALLY YOU DON'T EVEN EXIST.



SSN-21 SEAWOLF™

THE SEQUEL TO 688 ATTACK SUB™

The world holds its breath as the Russian task force slips out of Archangel, bound for Cuba. A nuclear nightmare on the high seas looks set to become a reality. Unless you and the SSN-21: Seawolf can prevent it. The Navy's secret weapon, Seawolf, will be the fastest, most heavily armed attack sub ever to put to sea. And only if Seawolf remains undetected can the ultimate disaster be averted.

The Seawolf is three times the sub of its predecessor - the smash hit 688 Attack Sub. It's a game of stealth,

cunning and explosive action that recreates the unrelenting tension of underwater warfare to stunning effect. With 33 missions taking on over 65 subs, warships and aircraft, you'll be taken to breaking point by the sheer intensity.

Breaking new ground in digitised sound quality and mesmerising graphic detail, Seawolf makes the murky depths of the ocean floor a watery reality. Everything from enemy destroyers to diving dolphins are picked up on the sonar screens, while extensive video footage keeps you up to date with your crew and events on the surface.

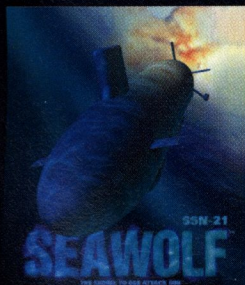
Deep, silent and deadly, the Seawolf hunts alone.

ELECTRONIC ARTS



To buy your copy of this game, visit your local retailer. In case of any difficulty, contact EA Direct on 0753 549 442.
Electronic Arts, 90 Heron Drive, Langley, Berks SL3 8XP

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Bulletin

Double Dutch

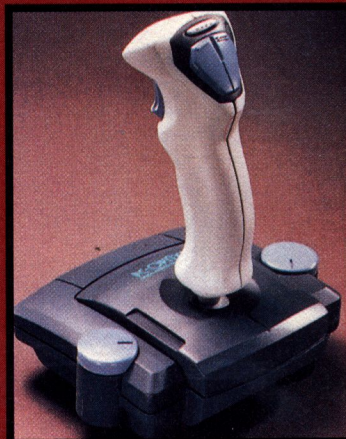
At last your computer can talk to you in a language you can't understand. Following *Micro Spanish*, which featured interactive real speech, LCL is releasing *Micro French*, *Micro German* and even *Micro English*.

All the programs have animated cartoons and adventure games with the speech recorded by a native speaker.

LCL reckon you don't even need a soundcard to hear the speech - thanks to a nifty programming trick the language packages can send analogue signals through the PC speaker. And they promise that you won't turn out like a French dalek. If you do have a soundcard you can get music as well. The packages run on just about any PC. The price is £24.99 and LCL are on 0491 579 345.

Irresistible Optix

The PC Optix joystick featured in last issue's CES report is now being imported by Spectravideo. The PC Optix uses non-contact optical sensors rather than variable resistors. This makes it resistant to wear and drift. The joystick has four fire buttons and is dual digital/analogue. The price is £39.99. You can contact Spectravideo on 081 900 0029.



Miracle Worker

Software Toolworks had a resounding success with its Miracle Piano System. This was a fully featured keyboard tutor that came complete with a MIDI keyboard for £299. Now the company is releasing the package without the keyboard, but complete with drivers for any standard MIDI keyboard. Out now for £59.99 (probably), all Jools Holland wannabes can call Mindscape on 0444 246 333.



Ooops!

A couple of mistakes in the review of *Hot Sound and Vision* CD (last issue). Someone nicked it before we could write down the name of the publisher. The CD is published by Unica (061 429 0241) and the price is a mere £18 plus VAT. The score is still 85% and *Hot Sound and Vision 2* is promised shortly.

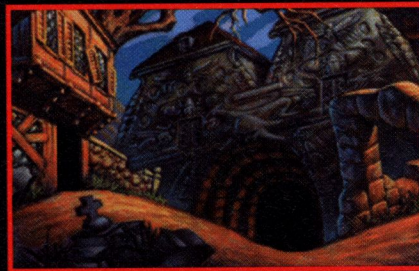
Immortal Combat



Choose the type of hero that suits your style—Fighter, Magic User, or Thief.



Pick a combat system – from pure strategy to thumb-twitching arcade action.

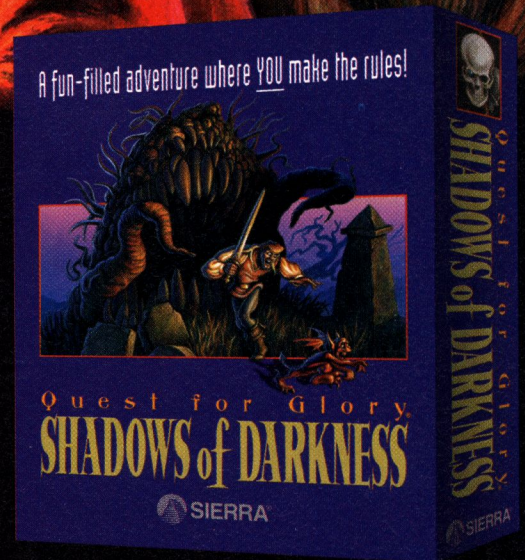


Dark settings and light-hearted humour combine in this fun-filled fright fest.

The Dark One awaits. A crazed cult has kept his evil image alive in an isolated mountain valley. Now a beautiful but deadly vampire has enlisted the aid of some wicked Wyverns, raucous Revenants, nefarious Necrotaur, and even a wild-eyed wizard. The dark forces wait with weapons ready and fangs bared.

A Fun-Filled Fright Fest Where YOU Make the Rules!

- Create your own character, choosing a Fighter, Magic User, or Thief. Puzzles, combat, and obstacles change according to your character type and development.
- Start fresh or import your character from *Quest for Glory I, II, or III*.
- Fight monsters with a sophisticated new battle system that lets you choose skill level and combat type—from pure strategy to adrenaline-pumping thumb-twitching arcade action.
- Unravel a variety of puzzles—nearly three times as many as found in other adventure games.



For further information contact 0734 303171

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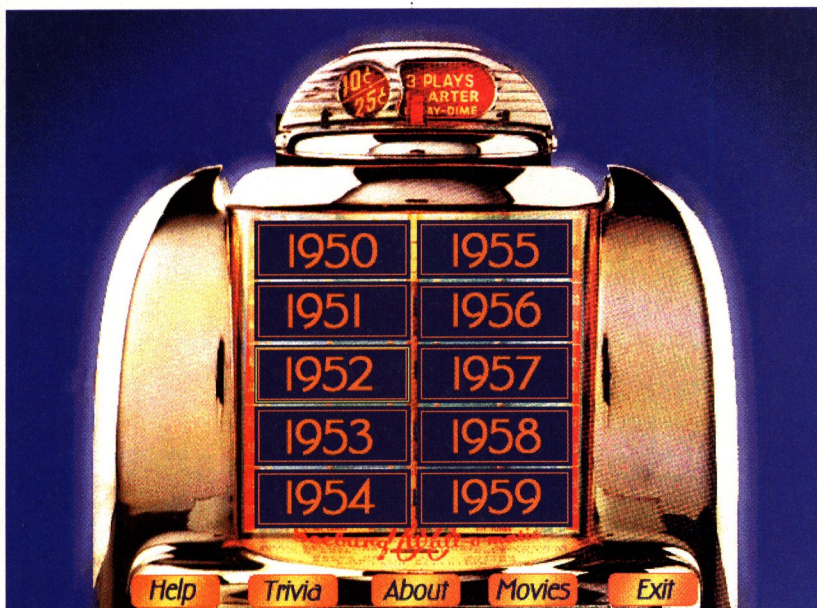
Bulletin

Elvis sighted on CD-ROM!

If you thought that something as up to date as CD-ROM has little to do with the golden age of rock 'n' roll then think again. Supervision has come up with the perfect way to tie the two together. *The Rock-n-Roll Decades* is a series of CD-ROMs to be launched during the remainder of 1994, the first being *The 50's*.

The core of the product is a complete record of the album and singles charts for every month of the decade. There are also thousands of facts on the stars and songs of the era. In addition to the textual database, the drive-in movie screen gives you access to half an hour of full-motion video of original recordings from the period. There's also a pop quiz to test your knowledge of the decade's sounds and stars.

The 50's is available now for £24.99, other decades to follow shortly.



Share-ware

Electronic Arts has paid \$400 million for the 'edutainment' software house Broderbund in a share swap transaction. 'It will be a major brand against which to compete,' said European VP of Sales and Marketing, David Gardner, 'We intend to give Microsoft a difficult opponent to compete with'.

Broderbund is probably best known for the *Carmen Sandiego* series.



Making music with Memphis

Media Vision's Memphis provides a complete multimedia solution in one easy-to-use desktop package. We let *Laurence Scottford* loose on it to see if it could take the strain.



What do you need to make a multimedia machine? Well a fast 386 or 486 with a decent SVGA graphics card obviously. But beyond that, you're still going to need a 16-bit sound card, a double-speed CD-ROM drive, an amplifier and a pair of stereo speakers, plus some sort of

microphone if you want the complete works. Once you've splashed out for that little lot, you've got to fit it all into your machine and then coax all the individual pieces into working with each other, and if you think that sounds easy, think again - it's more likely to be a nightmare.

Wouldn't it be nice if you could get all those bits in one attractive package, in which individual components were designed to work with each other, and which required minimal installation effort. It would be even nicer if the whole thing looked nice on your desktop, and not like a bundle of ill-matched components just thrown together. Well Media Vision seems to have had the same thought and that's why it has come up with the *Memphis*.

The *Memphis* is described, rather grandiosely, as a multimedia theatre, which is basically a pompous way of saying it has just about everything you need to turn a straightforward PC into a multimedia games powerhouse. It's main selling point is that the whole caboodle comes in a smart external unit, which has been designed to sit neatly



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under a small monitor. The stereo speakers either slot on each side of the main unit or fit into bases and stand upright up to four feet to the side of the main unit.

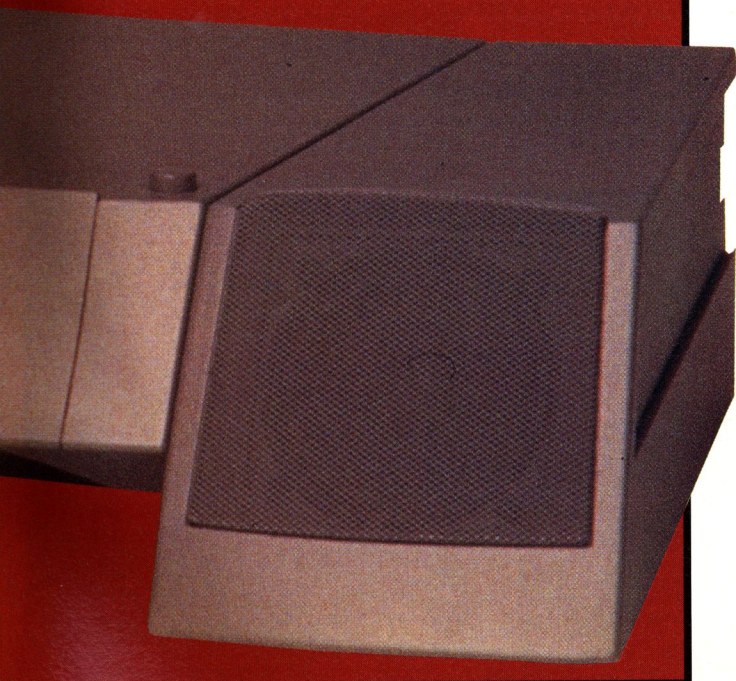
Inside the box is a double speed CD drive and a stereo amplifier. The main unit also houses connections for the supplied condenser microphone and for hooking the *Memphis* up to an external amplifier or hi-fi if you need more welly. The whole thing is connected via a single cable to a special version of the Pro Audio Spectrum 16 soundcard which fits into a spare 16-bit expansion slot. This card also has a SCSI interface. Adding a special bracket to this enables you to add extra SCSI devices at a later date.

A big plus of the *Memphis* is that, not only can you use it as an audio CD player, you can carry on using it as an audio CD player long after your PC has been switched off, broken down or repossessed. Audio CDs can be played either by using the front panel controls or with the supplied software.

In addition to a set of control software, the *Memphis* comes supplied with two children's CD games: *Arthur's Teacher Trouble*, and *Forever Growing Garden*, ExecuVoice voice recognition software, Recording Studio a sequencer, and four games from MicroProse.

Although the *Memphis* may seem expensive, if you add up the individual cost of the components, and take into consideration the convenience, and that you are buying an audio CD player as well, it represents very good value.

Memphis: £704 inc. VAT. Contact SMI on 081 563 2222



Bulletin

AWESome new Sound Blaster

New from Creative Labs is the Sound Blaster AWE32. This latest member of the Sound Blaster family uses the Advanced WavEffects synthesis, patented by EMU Systems Inc. This new technology uses wave sample rather than normal wave table synthesis. This yields symphonic quality and real instrument sound. The card supports 16 channels with 32 voices and special effects such as reverb, chorus, Qsound, vibrato and tremolo. The EMU8000 digital audio processor takes some of the work away from the computer's own CPU and allows complicated sound effects in real time.

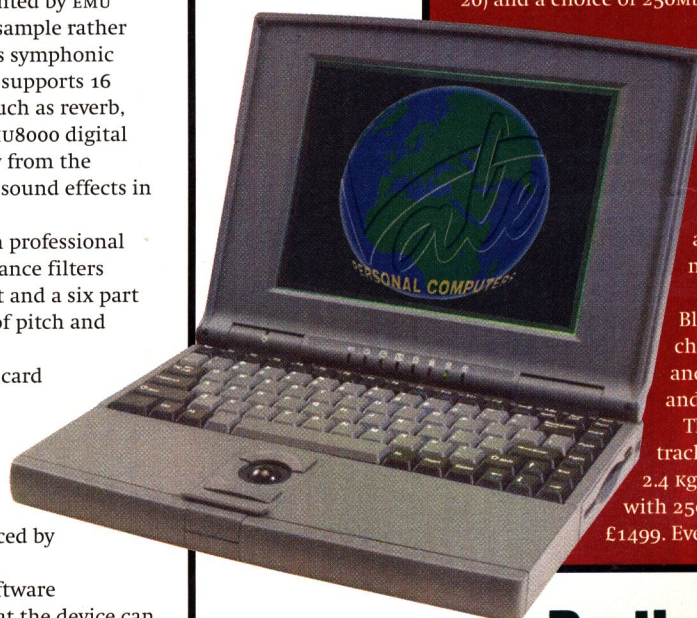
The card has features usually associated with professional systems. There are pitch shifting tools, resonance filters which control the timbre of each instrument and a six part auxiliary envelope for independent control of pitch and timbre.

Sampling is 16-bit and at up to 44.1 KHz. The card also supports the main CD-ROM standards - Sony, Creative and Mitsumi - and EMU's SoundFont library of digital samples, regarded as the finest available. Up to 512k of RAM in 2 SIMM sockets is provided for storing samples; these chips can be replaced by ones of higher value.

The ASP - advanced digital processor - is a software programmable digital signal processor so that the device can be updated to deal with new audio technologies without changing the hardware. The card is 100% backwards compatible with the various other members of the Sound Blaster family.

Nik [sic] Grant, marketing manager at Creative says, 'by providing a solution for musicians who want to produce professional quality music. Sound Blaster AWE32 also enables users to develop multimedia applications through the use of multiple channel audio, downloadable sound and state-of-the-art special effects'.

The AWE32 is priced at £200 and Creative are on 0743 248 590.



Fantastic Voyager

Evesham's Vale range now has a portable. The Voyager has a neat modular design, a host of energy saving features and built in sound capability. The low power - 5 volt - CPUs range from 486SX 33 to 486DX2 66.

The machines come with 4Mb ram as standard (upgradable to 20) and a choice of 250Mb or 340Mb hard disks. They include PCMCIA socket, Serial and Parallel ports and a 160 pin Docking Station. There's a PS/2 connector which allows you to use a mouse.

Display is LCD mono, Dual Scan Passive and TFT Active Colour.

Replacement screens just snap into place. The Voyager has a local bus and an external video socket to drive monitors up to 1024x764 at 256.

Sound capabilities include full Sound Blaster compatibility and a Yamaha chipset. There is a built in microphone and speakers and jack sockets for audio in and earphone.

The full function keyboard includes a trackball and the mono version weighs just 2.4 kg. Prices start at £1149 for the 486SX 33 with 250Mb hard disk. The colour version is £1499. Evesham Micros are on 0386 765 500.

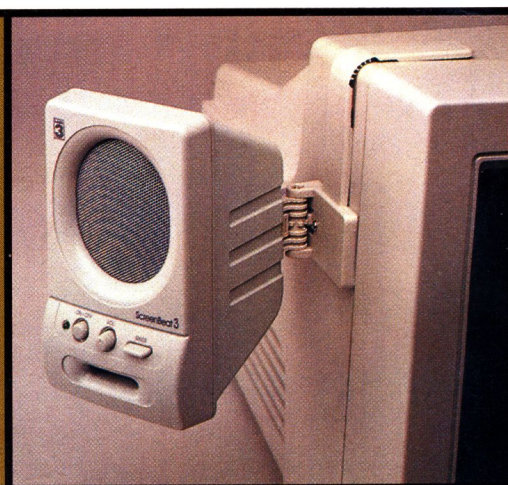
Do the Write Thing

Do you know the difference between a CRPG and an AGA? Would you be able to say who wrote *Elite*, *MicroProse Grand Prix* or *Strike Commander*. Are you aware who the real face is behind Lord British? If these questions don't totally phase you, and if your literate enough not to fail to spot the three mistake's in this sentence, then you're just the person we're looking for. *PC Zone* is looking to expand its team of freelance writers. So, if you are as mad about PC games as we are, and if you think you're up to joining the ranks of the finest freelance games journalists send a sample review of a recent game, written in *PC Zone's* style along with a covering letter to: Freelance Applications, *PC Zone*, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ.



The beat goes on

The new ScreenBeat 3 stereo speakers from Logic 3 feature built-in amplifier and booster circuitry for optimum sound quality. They are magnetically shielded to prevent monitor interference, compatible with most major sound cards and you can play your Walkman through them. Price is £16.99. Logic 3 are on 081 902 2211.





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• MYST	34.99
• RISE OF THE ROBOTS	44.99
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* PC ZONE RECOMMENDED APRIL 1994 ISSUE

** PC ZONE CLASSIC APRIL 1994 ISSUE

! SEE REVIEW IN THIS ISSUE

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GALLUP CHARTS

So many games, so little time – these days shopping for your PC can be a nightmare. But now, with the help of Gallup's handy household charts, you can check out what you should be playing. There's something for everyone here: full-price PC titles, budget games and even a selection of CD-ROM titles.

Top 20 Full Price Titles

1. Sim City 2000	Maxis/Mindscape	£39.99
2. Frontier: Elite 2	Gametek	£39.99
3. Microsoft Flight Simulator V.5	Microsoft	£39.99
4. Premier Manager 2	Gremlin Graphics	£34.99
5. Mortal Kombat	Virgin	£29.99
6. X-Wing	US Gold	£45.99
7. Alone In The Dark 2	Infogrames	£44.99
8. TFX	Ocean	£44.99
9. Indy Car Racing	Virgin	£44.99
10. Starlord	Microprose	£44.99
11. B Wing	US Gold	£20.99
12. Police Quest 4	Sierra OnLine	£39.99
13. Sam And Max - Hit The Road	US Gold	£42.99
14. Star Trek: Judgement Rites	Interplay	£44.99
15. Indiana Jones - Fate Of Atlantis	US Gold	£37.99
16. Sensible Soccer 92/93	Renegade/Mdscape	£32.99
17. Championship Manager 93	Domark	£29.99
18. Sim City/Lemmings	Infogrames	£29.99
19. Gabriel Knight	Sierra OnLine	£39.99
20. Network Q RAC Rally	Europress Softwre	£34.99

Top 10 PC Budget Titles

1. Sim City 2000 Demo Disk	Maxis/Mindscape	£2.99
2. Monkey Island	Kixx XL	£16.99
3. Eye Of The Beholder	Kixx XL	£16.99
4. Another World	Kixx XL	£14.99
5. Fun School 2 Under 6	Hit Squad	£9.99
6. Championship Manager Data Disk	Domark	£9.99
7. Winter Challenge	Hit Squad	£12.99
8. Links - The Challenge Of Golf	Kixx XL	£16.99
9. Police Quest 1	Kixx XL	£16.99
10. Wing Commander	Hit Squad	£14.99

Top 10 CD-ROM Titles

1. The Lawnmower Man	SCI	£54.99
2. Rebel Assault	US Gold	£45.99
3. Gabriel Knight	Sierra OnLine	£44.99
4. Day Of The Tentacle	US Gold	£45.99
5. Iron Helix	Microprose	£39.99
6. Comanche Maximum Overkill	Novalogic	£49.99
7. The Journeyman Project	Gametek	£39.99
8. Super Strike Commander	Electronic Arts	£49.99
9. Microcosm	Psygnosis	£49.99
10. Dracula Unleashed	Mindscape	£49.99

CANNON FODDER



GAME OF THE MONTH £20.99

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DAY OF THE TENTACLE	26.99	PREMIER MANAGER 2	21.99
DARKSUN SHATTERED LANDS	31.99	PRIVATEER	30.99
• D-DAY	CALL	PRIVATEER - RIGHTEOUS FIRE	14.99
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COVER DISKS

EXCLUSIVE TO PC ZONE

Battle Isle 2

Massive playable demo of the strategy game of the year

VGA ONLY, 4Mb & 386 OR BETTER REQUIRED
SEE PAGE 16 FOR FULL INSTRUCTIONS



Battle Isle 2 is undoubtedly the most anticipated strategy game of recent years, and it certainly lives up to expectations. But you needn't take our word for it, because you can see for yourself by playing the massive demo on our cover disk. It's so huge we've had to put some of it on the second disk. But don't worry, we've still managed to squeeze three more great games on too!

Battle Isle 2

The strategy game of the decade is back, but now it's had a host of new features bolted on. Check out our review on page 106 and you'll see why we're so excited about it. But we wanted to give you the opportunity to find out for yourself how absorbing *Battle Isle 2* is, so we've asked Blue Byte to put together this massive scenario featuring most of the units available in the complete game. Your objective is simply to eliminate your enemies and survive.

How to load Battle Isle 2

To load *Battle Isle 2*, log onto the drive and directory in which you have installed it and type:

B12

You must have your additional memory

EXCLUSIVE TO PC ZONE

OVERKILL

The ultimate shoot 'em-up

SPIDER RUN

A dangerously addictive puzzle game (Requires mouse)

PILE ON

Top-notch card game for Windows (Requires VBRUN300.DLL)

EGA/VGA SEE PAGE 16 FOR FULL INSTRUCTIONS



Take your next holiday on *Battle Isle*: sun, sand surf, and storm troopers.

How to play Battle Isle 2

- 1 Mapped Territory
- 2 Unmapped Territory
- 3 Control Bar
- 4 Control Bar Descriptions
- 5 Experience Level
- 6 Cursor-Location
- 7 Unit-Name
- 8 Fuel
- 9 Number of Units
- 10 Ammunition
- 11 Available Weapons
- 12 Your Units
- 13 Enemy Units
- 14 Allied Units
- 15 Road
- 16 Railroad
- 17 Cursor
- 18 Building
- 19 Aldinium Crystal

configured as EMS and your mouse driver installed before you attempt to boot up and run *Battle Isle 2*.

In this simulation, you play the blue force, your enemy is the red force, and the other three forces, orange, green and grey will align themselves according to their initial dispositions and the course of the battle. The action is divided into rounds. In each round you have the opportunity to move, attack, or perform other functions with as many of your units as you wish. Once you have completed all the actions that you can or wish to perform, you end your turn and allow the computer-controlled players to move.

To make a move, you should move the cursor over the unit you want to manipulate and press and hold the left mouse button. One or more icons will appear in the control bar at the bottom of the screen. Move the mouse left or right until the relevant icon is highlighted and then release the button to activate it.

Unit Functions

Move: When this icon is selected, the possible destinations for the unit will be shown. Simply click on the required destination to make the move you want.

Attack: If there are enemy units in range they will be highlighted. Click on the unit or feature

that you wish to attack, keeping the mouse button depressed, and a series of icons will appear which represent the various weapons you have at your disposal. Move the cursor left or right to select the most appropriate weapon for the

unit you wish to attack, then release the mouse button. The battle will be shown in a 3D sequence.



How to install your cover disk

So that we can pack as much as possible onto each disk, all the games and demos are compressed. Before you can run them, you will need to install them on your hard drive. To install *Battle Isle*, insert disk one into a 3.5" disk drive and type:

A:

or whatever drive letter is appropriate. Now start the installation program by typing:

INSTALL

The program will ask you where you want to install *Battle Isle 2* and check that there is enough space. You should select option 1 on the following menu to confirm the installation. At some stage the program will ask you to swap disks. At this point please remove disk one and insert disk two. After all the files have been copied to your hard drive you must choose your sound and music options.

To install the other programs place your cover disk into a 3.5" disk drive and make that drive current by typing:

A:

or whatever drive letter is appropriate. Now start the installation program by typing:

DISKZONE

The installation program will display a list of the programs on the disk. Use the cursor keys to highlight the program you wish to install and then press RETURN. The installation program will suggest a drive and directory. If you wish to install the program to an alternative drive or directory, backspace over the default location, enter a new one and then press RETURN. If you are happy with the default location, simply press RETURN.

You should now see the files being listed as they are installed on your hard drive. Once the program has been successfully installed you will be returned to the program list where you may select another program or press ESC to exit to DOS.

May



Contents: This shows a screen with details of units stored in the selected item.



Other icons are shown in the bar below: They operate in similar ways to those described above.

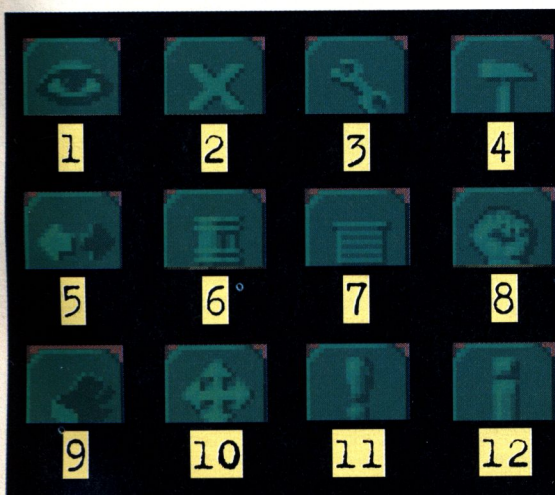


Information: This shows a screen with technical information on the selected unit. If no unit is currently selected, it shows information on the current state of the campaign.



Energy Efficiency

To be able to produce new units or repair old ones you need energy. This is supplied in the form of aldinium crystals which can be found lying around the landscape. You should collect aldinium crystals by moving over them with units capable of carrying cargo. Then transport the cargo to friendly buildings. Good Luck.



Icons

- 1 Overview Map
- 2 Abort
- 3 Repair
- 4 Produce new units
- 5 End Turn
- 6 Refuel
- 7 Menu
- 8 Attack
- 9 Contents
- 10 Move
- 11 Perform Action
- 12 Information

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The Best Prices

The Latest Titles

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Newsweek Interactive	£40 £15
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Racecar Games Arena	
Racecar Learning Adventure	
Selectware	
Shareware Gold II	
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Visions of Saturn	
World Traveller	

E9 SPECIALS £40 FOR FIVE

HOT SOUND VISION
£19
WARNING!!!
 Sizzling cool stuff!
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 the best psycho, rave, punk
 and twisted graphics found
 on the electronic highway
 of internet



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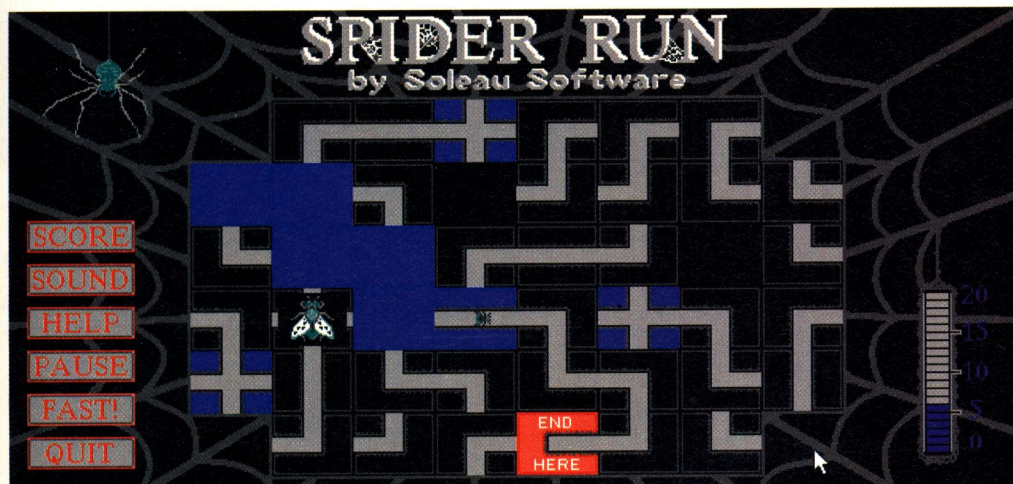
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Spider Run

If you enjoyed *Pipemania* you'll love this new game from Soleau Software, the top creator of shareware puzzle games. The objective is to keep a spider moving through its web for as long as possible by rotating blocks to create a pathway. On the way you can collect bonuses by eating flies and going through special bonus sections.

How to start Spider Run

Log onto the drive and directory in which you have installed Spider Run and type:

SPIDER

Full instructions are displayed within the program.

Pile On

We know there are solitaire games aplenty for Windows, but this one caught our eye because it is easy to learn and play, but surprisingly compulsive nonetheless.

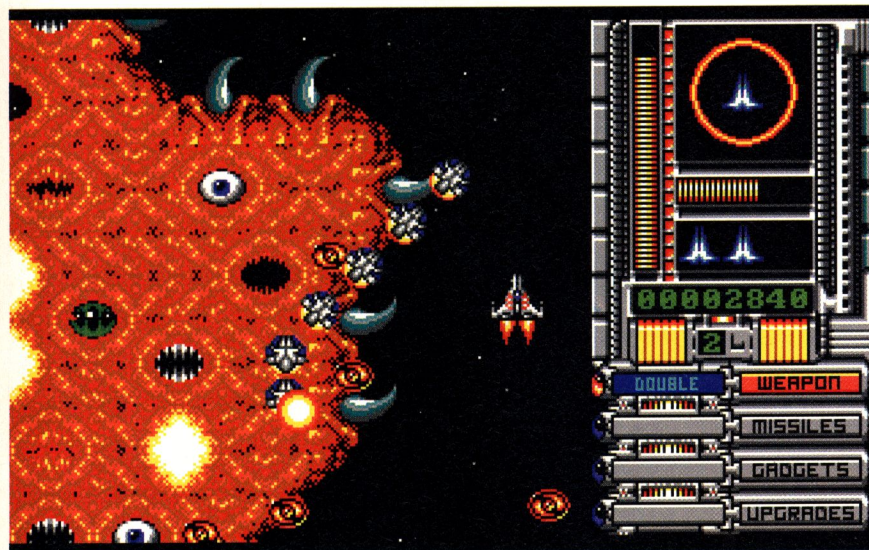
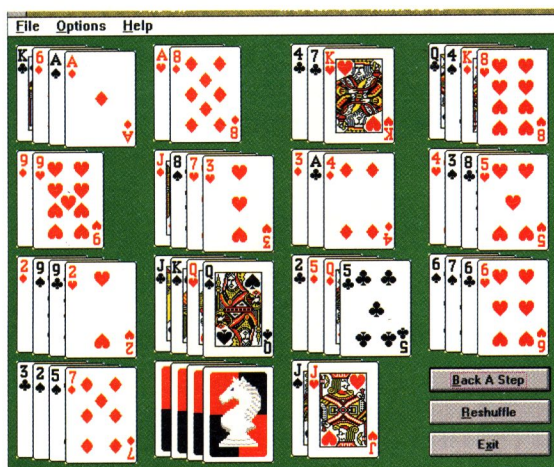
How to start Pile On

Start Windows, select RUN from the FILE menu and enter:

PILEON

preceded by the drive and directory in which you have installed it. Alternatively you can set up *Pile On* as a new item in Program Manager and subsequently start it by double-clicking. Consult your Windows documentation for instructions on doing this.

Pile On is a Visual BASIC program and will not run if it cannot find the VBRUN300.DLL file. If you have Visual BASIC you should have this file. If not, it is available from certain bulletin boards and shareware libraries.



Overkill

From Epic Megagames comes the very best vertically scrolling shoot 'em up since *Xenon* 2. This version has two planets from the full game. Your objective is to destroy the guardian aliens at the beginning of each level and then proceed through the alien environment, blasting everything that moves (and everything that doesn't for that matter).

How to start Overkill

Log onto the drive and directory in which you have installed Overkill and type:

OVERKILL

Full instructions are displayed within the program.

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Some of the programs on these disks are shareware. They are supplied as an evaluation service to our readers. If you like these programs and intend to go on using them, you should register them. In return you will usually receive updated or additional programs and other bonuses.

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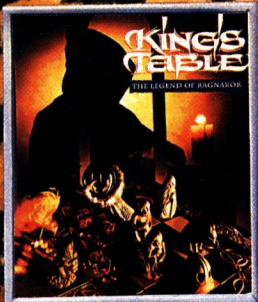
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If you're a regular reader of *PC Zone*, you'll notice a difference in our cover disks. Many of them have labels for other products underneath the *PC Zone* label. The reason? *PC Zone* has made a firm decision to use recycled disks. The disks we recycle are all spares from production runs of high quality, professional applications. We have also decided not to remove the original labels because this way we can avoid the use of potentially hazardous industrial solvents. We hope our readers will not be inconvenienced by this change of policy which we believe is beneficial both to the environment, and to our readers, because we can supply them with higher quality disks than would otherwise be possible.

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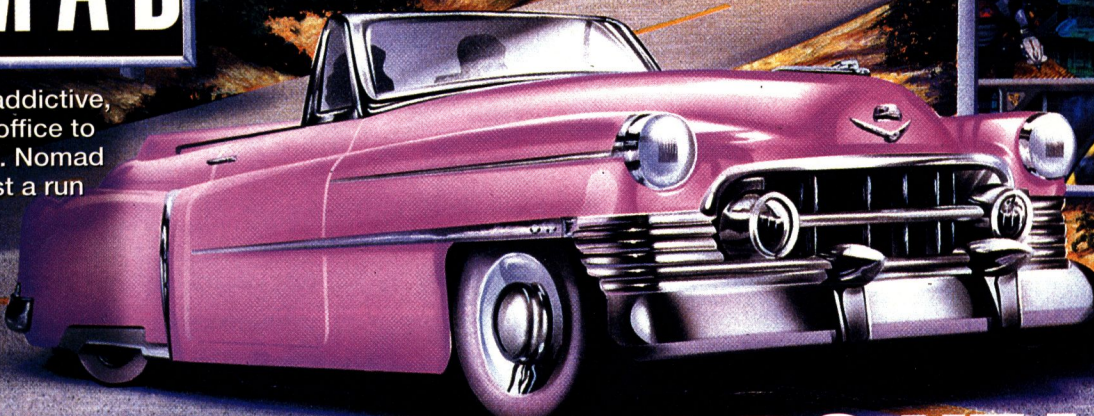
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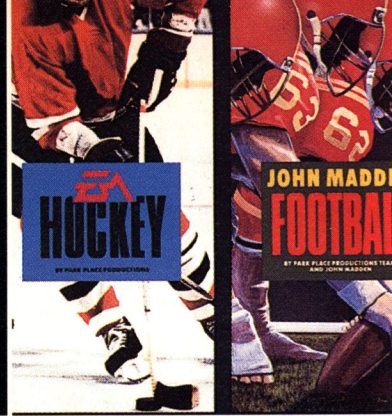
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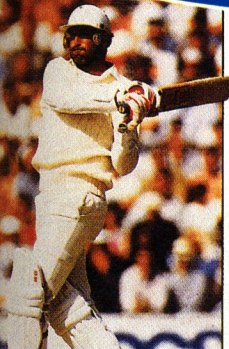
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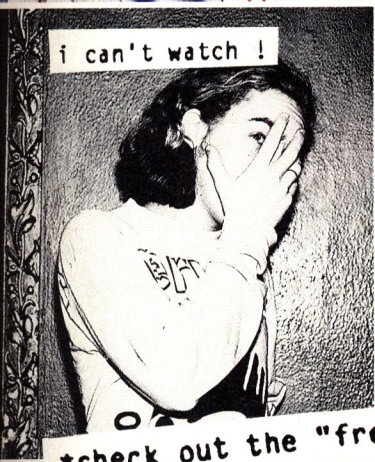
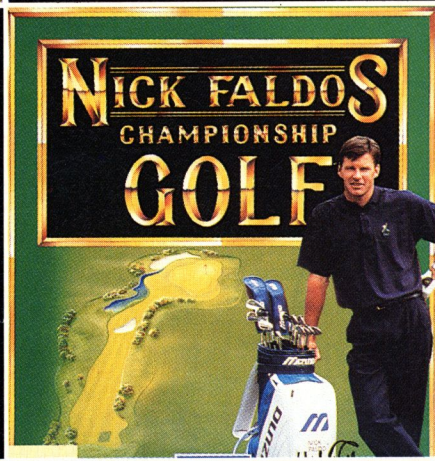


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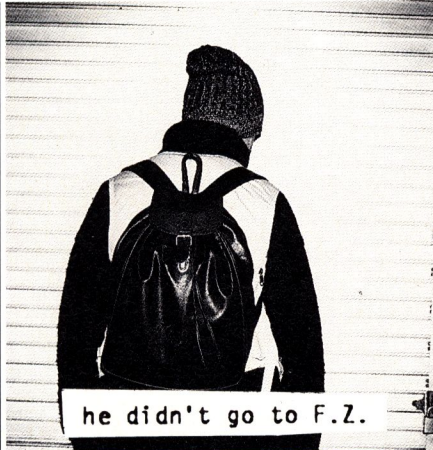
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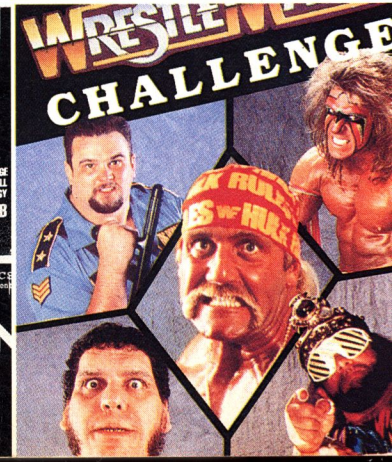
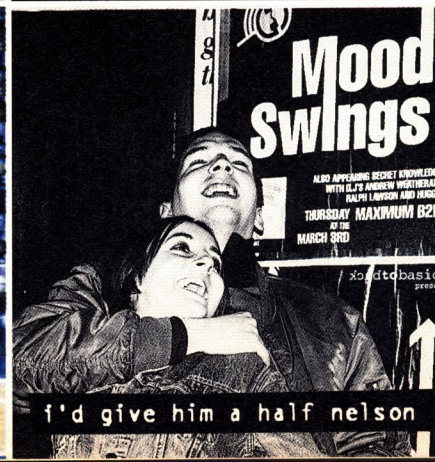
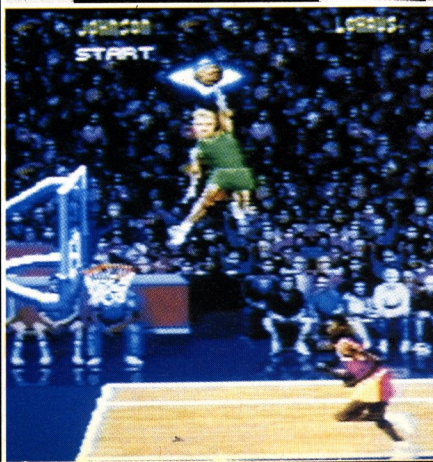
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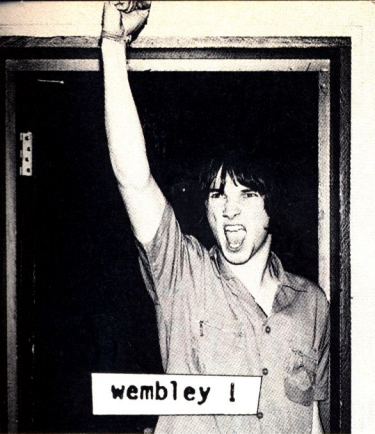


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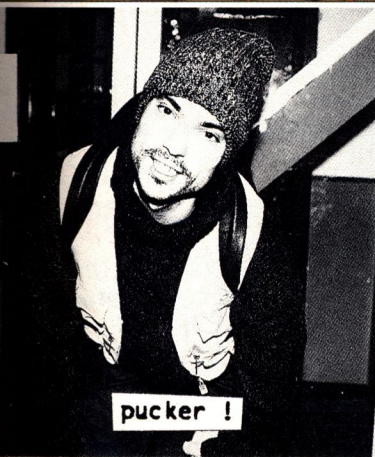
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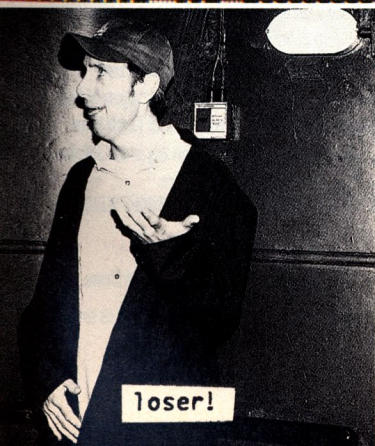
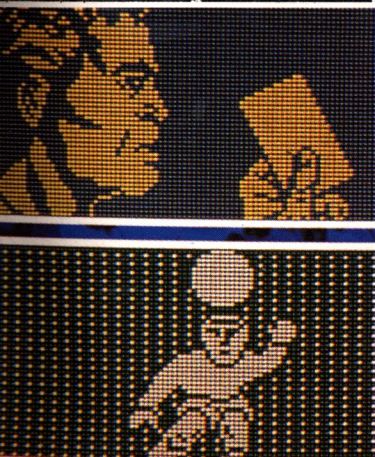
i'd give him a half nelson



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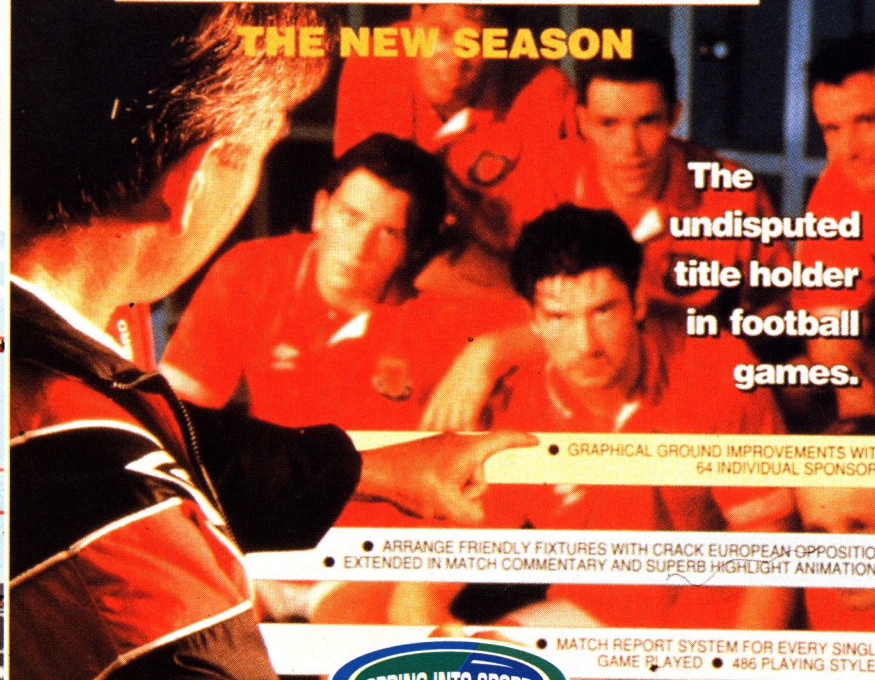
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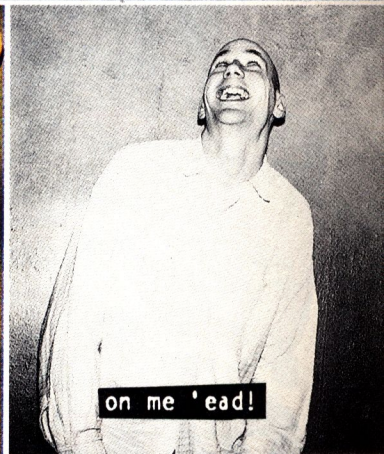
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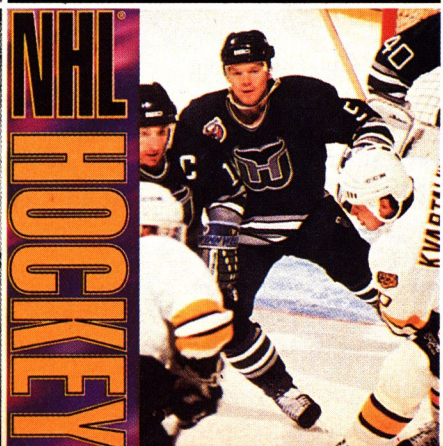
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The Joy Of Sticks

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and sometimes intimidating world of the joystick.



VIEWING JOYSTICKS is an act requiring almost military precision. You have to choose your games wisely to cover every joystick eventuality, making sure that each genre has been represented. I chose an arcade adventure, *Prince Of Persia*; a cutesy platform romp, *Fire And Ice*; a flight sim, *MiG-29* and a sports sim, *Mike Ditka Ultimate Football*. Obviously what a stick costs can be as important as what it can do and joystick prices can vary substantially. The sticks are grouped by price band rather than quoting exact prices because the competition between suppliers means that you will almost always get a discount somewhere if you shop around. As a guide, though, budget sticks are up to about £15, mid range reach around £25, expensive are up to £40 and the rest are more than that. Joypads are all between £15 and £20.

So what did you really do?

Had a good look at the sticks and fiddled with them. Saw if anything fell off or felt like it would. Looked at the packing, documentation and any installation software that came with the stick. Plugged them in and played the games. Wrote about them. Didn't include scores, but instead summarised what I thought were the best sticks in each range and why.

Is there much of a market for joysticks then?

It would seem so. My sources suggest that the average PC user spends about 3% of the value of his (or her) machine on a joystick, and most will have more than one stick each, swapping them around for different games. On top of this, you have the existing users either replacing broken sticks or upgrading. It also seems that the manufacturers are not too concerned about longevity, as long as the customer buys the same brand again. Of course, this makes sound commercial sense, but does mean that you don't always get the value for money you may hope for. All this adds up to a market worth around £30 million last year, and which is growing steadily. At the moment, the bulk of the market is carved up between Quickshot (who also make Technoplus sticks), Saitek and CH.

What's the big deal? A joystick is a joystick is a...

Well yes. And no. Sort of. There are two fundamentally different types of joystick on the market, with two very different targets. The first to arrive were the digital joysticks. These migrated to the wonderful world of the PC from arcade and console types of machine. The principle behind the digital stick is simple. You move the stick in one of four directions and it works a switch telling the computer to point that way. That's it. Either you are going left, for example, or you aren't. Terrific if all you want is rapid reaction and movement. Crap if you want precision control, like in a flight sim. To counter this, some bright spark thought up the analogue stick. The further you move it, the more it tells the computer to point that way. Don't ask me how, it just does, okay? This is great for landing your crippled jet on a pitching aircraft carrier at night and in a crosswind, but the slower reaction time means that it'll be crap for arcade games.

...unless it's a joypad.

Finally, just to really confuse things, there are devices called joypads. These are normally associated with consoles, and are ideal for platform games and the like. They work the same way as digital sticks, despite the way they look. Except the Suncom Command Centre, which is analogue.

So they are totally different, then?

No. Well, not really, although there are a few functional differences, as a techie would say. Analogue sticks usually have some sort of trim control to make up for any drift in the sensors. Really expensive analogue sticks have some sort of clever doobry to do that for you. Just remember that if you pause your dogfight for whatever reason and fiddle about with the little wheels on the base of your stick before restarting, things ain't gonna go the way you expect. Oh, and analogue sticks tend to be more expensive. And they break more easily. (There isn't a lot to break in a digital stick).



Technoplus Hawk+

The Product: Feels better than it looks. A slightly loose feel but comfortable and easy to use. Two fire buttons with an autofire facility, plus the ability to make the stick fully floating (ie switch off self-centring. Don't know why, but some folks like it that way). Good strong suction cups on the base and a six foot cable, but some moulding marks and rough edges spoil the effect slightly. The trim controls, while easy to reach and use, are very vague and there is no calibration software supplied with the stick. In fact, there is nothing at all supplied with it.

The Performance: Performed well generally, although it lacks the precision needed for serious flight sims with the loose feel making it easy to over-control. Accurate and fast enough for both the platform games with the loose feel being quite advantageous in places. **Contact:** Technoplus 0604 768711



Quickshot Python 5

The Product: Looks and feels like the budget stick it is. Shares the same handgrip as the Hawk+, but has a shorter shaft. This means that although my hands are by no means large, I found the grip uncomfortable to use after a while. Two fire buttons with autofire and a very small range of movement, although being a digital stick this doesn't matter. Very strong suction cups to the base and a six foot cable. No calibration software supplied or necessary, and no documentation.

The Performance: Quite acceptable for arcade type games, although the size and limited range of movement makes it rather uncomfortable to use after a while. Seriously not recommended for flight sims due to the uncontrollable nature of digital outputs! Works fine for sports and most other games, though. **Contact:** Quickshot 081 365 1993

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Konix Speedking Analogue

The Product: A handheld stick with an ergonomically designed base that works very well but is spoilt by poor quality mouldings and a hideous vinyl decorative panel stuck to the top. The two fire buttons are mounted where your left fingers naturally lie, which is terrific as long as you're right handed. Instead of a conventional trim setting, there is a press button centre adjuster which calibrates instantly. The self centring mode can be turned off and the cable is plenty long enough.

The Performance: Performance is very good, with the comfortable grip and nicely weighted stick combining to overcome the less than polished appearance. The small stick means that control is really a fingertip job, although this is no bad thing. Flight sims proved to be no problem, and response time was fine for arcade type games, too. **Contact:** Konix 0495 350101



Cheetah PC Powerplay

The Product: An interesting stick with three fire buttons, a steel shaft and a steady base with non-slip feet. Unfortunately, it came apart in my hands. To be fair, it still worked when I re-assembled it, but I was not impressed. The plastic has a nasty oily feel to it, and the fire buttons are a lurid shade of red and feel very imprecise. The stick itself is quite smooth but, being offset to one side, is quite easy to tip it over when getting carried away, although this is more an observation than a criticism. The cable is rather short: I had to cut some moulding marks off the plug before it would fit onto the machine.

The Performance: Broke during testing, although continued to work. Uncomfortable and awkward to use, with a response too slow for good results at arcade games and too vague for flight sims. Did okay at sports where less finesse is needed from the stick. **Contact:** Cheetah 0222 867777



Saitek Megagrip 3

The Product: Well, it certainly looks different, with a trigger guard, chrome pads on the base and a rather snazzy looking dark grey and white design. Surprisingly for such an unusual design, it is also very comfortable to use and it certainly looks like a quality product. Despite this, there is a slightly flimsy and lightweight feel to the stick, and the thin plastic shaft at the base of the stick must raise questions of longevity. Two conventionally placed fire buttons and standard trim switches on the base, along with an autofire switch and a six foot cable complete the picture.

The Performance: Performed brilliantly in *Prince Of Persia*, and well up to the mark for sports and arcade games, although the buttons feel a little delicate when the going gets tough. Not really precise enough for flight sims, sadly. **Contact:** Saitek 0778 344611



Wico Merlin

The Product: A rather nice looking stick which is comfortable to use. It has no outstanding features, although the top fire button is designed to be comfortable to use whether you're left or right handed. Pity then that you have to negate that by pressing it right at the top, though. Two conventionally placed fire buttons with external trim controls sit on the base as usual. As a whole, it seems to be of a good quality and comes with a six foot cable.

The Performance: Performed brilliantly during *Prince Of Persia*, giving exactly the right blend of accuracy and response, and seemed well able to deliver the goods in other games too. The exception to the rule would be serious flight sims. Lacking in sensitivity and accuracy, although not as bad as some. **Contact:** Suncom 0285 642211

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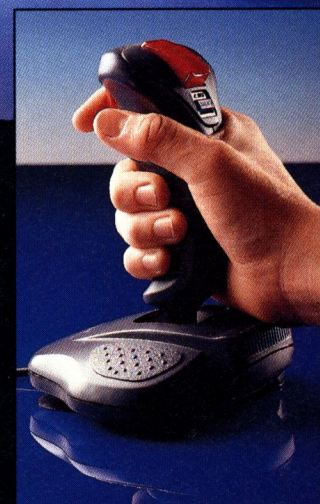


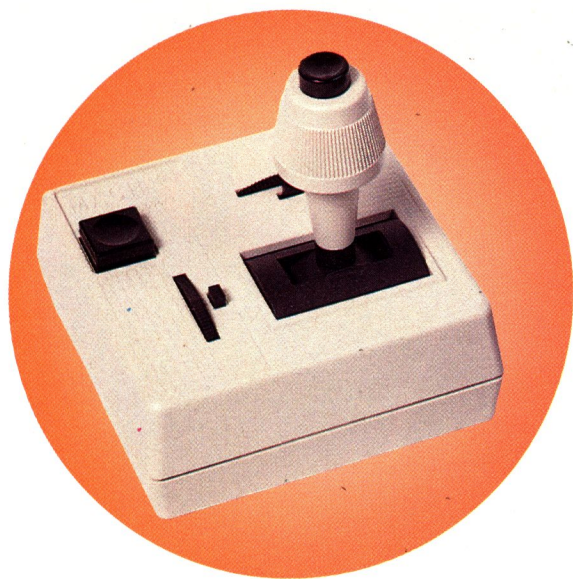
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CH Mach 1+

The Product: This fingertip style stick is characterised by expensive looking mouldings, eight feet of industrial grade cable and no pointless gadgets. There are two fire buttons, trim controls and a free floating mode for each axis, along with excellent non-slip feet. Although it's a little small for my tastes, I really can't fault it in any way. However, in the heat of the moment, it's quite possible for the whole thing to pitch over onto your lap. It comes with a DRY calibration routine in the manual, which requires a little BASIC programming, and a neat clip which holds the plug onto your games card.

The Performance: Performance was not as good as it might have been, proving uncomfortable for use in the cut and thrust of arcade games. At the same time, it is too small for accurate flight control, although the response from the stick was like lightning in both cases.

Contact: CH 0494 488551



Quickshot Super Warrior

The Product: Four buttons and a throttle wheel make this one of the best equipped sticks available. It seems to be built to a better standard than other sticks of its ilk, with clean mouldings and no sharp edges. The stick has a comfortable rubber grip, and all the buttons are easily accessible although having two buttons on the front of the base takes some getting used to. The buttons are all responsive and the throttle wheel can be turned off if necessary. Six feet of cable with a screw connector and Windows compatible calibration software complete the picture.

The Performance: Performance was good in *Prince Of Persia*, although hard work for no apparent reason. Reaction rates and accuracy were both acceptable. Flight sims and sports games proved no problem, although precision became a little suspect in close-up dogfighting.

Contact: Quickshot 081 365



Suncom FX2000

The Product: Probably gets the award for the most bizarre looking device of the week. Despite this, the general look and feel is one of a quality product. The facility to change the actual layout of the stick to suit left or right-handed players is quite impressive, and it does actually seem that for once, form has been dictated by function. The stick has two conventionally placed fire buttons, trimmers and a throttle wheel on the base, and comes fitted with a six foot cable.

The Performance: Gave a superb performance in both the arcade and sports games, with the ideal combination of weight and speed. Unfortunately, not so good at flight sims, proving both too stiff and too vague for real success.

Contact: Suncom 0285 642211



Gravis Analogue

The Product: Although it has three excellent feeling buttons, it only behaves as a two button stick, each being programmable to be either button A or button B. There is an eight position tension control, and the wide base with foam non-slip pads makes for a stable platform. Also, the stick is padded, making it possibly the most comfortable to use so far, although the lack of a conventionally placed trigger is irritating. There is an excellent utilities disk which includes a program to detect gamecard conflicts within your machine.

The Performance: A little slow in the arcade games. However, accurate enough and very comfortable. Okay in *MiG-29*, but not outstanding. Response and accuracy both good and consistent, though lack of trigger is a turn-off. Provided enough accuracy to do tailsides (tricky!).

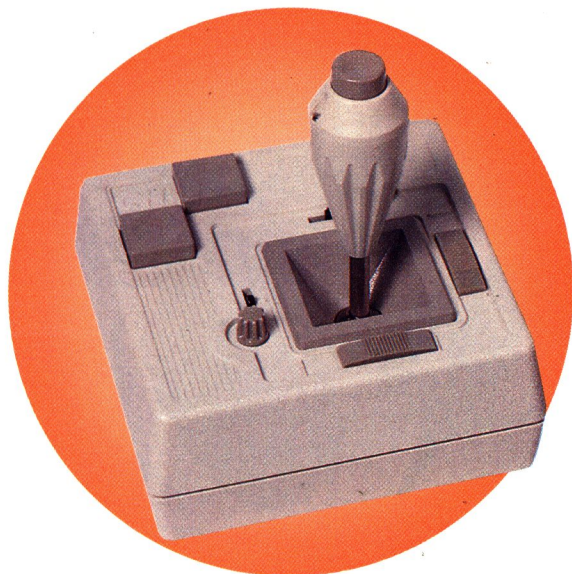
Contact: Gravis 0101 31 40 110110 or UK distributors Zye Technology 0293 538666

[illegible]

GET EVEN.



Advanced GRAVIS



CH Mach 3

The Product: Another fingertip stick, this time with three fire buttons and very neat rotary trimmers which make it almost impossible for you to mess up the calibration of your stick by mistake. There are switches to put either or both axes into free floating mode, eight feet of heavy cable and a proper screw fastened plug. The whole stick has a heavy yet smooth feel, with my only concern being that I don't like small bases, even such solid ones as this. The stick comes with the same DIY calibration routine as the rest of the CH range, although the rotary trimmers should mean that you won't need to use it very often.

The Performance: A very smooth and accurate stick which is well up to the mark for arcade games, sports and flight sims. A little small for really long sessions, but that is down to taste.

Contact: CH 0494 488551



CH Flightstick

The Product: This stick is huge - functionality has triumphed over form in a big way, and this is a very comfortable and functional stick to use. It has two conventionally placed and very smooth fire buttons plus a rotary throttle and the normal trim controls we have come to expect. There is no free floating mode, although you get eight feet of heavyweight cable, a screw plug, excellent non-slip feet and a build quality that feels as if you could never break the stick. The only slight gripe is that it's quite a stretch to the top thumb button. As with the rest of the CH range, you get a DIY BASIC calibration routine and a comprehensive manual.

The Performance: Hugely successful at flight sims, but too slow and unwieldy to survive at either of the arcade games. Brilliantly accurate, sensitive and balanced for anything else.

Contact: CH 0494 488551



Gravis Analogue Pro

The Product: With five buttons, a throttle and a very comfortable handle, this is a well equipped stick. It also has a few quirks. At the base is a disc which prevents it from snapping off. Trouble is, the stick won't go as far to the right as it should, and you can end up trapping your hand between the stick and the base. The five buttons are actually only four, with trigger and one thumb button being duplicates, but the throttle makes up for that. There is a six foot cable, the dinky screwdriver and the excellent utilities software that comes with the rest of the range, as well as the quadra-lingual manual.

The Performance: Good response but a very uncomfortable trigger if used in arcade games. A little slow at quick direction changes, but fine for sports. Possibly over-sensitive for flight sims, needing a lot of time to get used to it.

Contact: Gravis 0101 31 40 110110 or UK distributors Zye Technology 0293



RC Simulations Freeflight

The Product: This is a two button joystick with no base at all. It's slightly curved and rounded at the bottom, the idea being that you rest it on your chair between your legs like a real joystick. The two fire buttons are side by side at the top of the stick, and the whole thing is covered with a shiny rubber coat. It looks a little odd, although it's certainly comfortable to use. It has a six foot cable and a photocopied hint sheet. There is no trim, no calibration program and no gadgetry. The whole thing feels and looks well made, although the fire buttons look as though they belong on an arcade game.

The Performance: Good for sword fighting in *Prince* and an excellent collective lever for helicopter sims. Otherwise, try before you buy because it takes a lot of getting used to. Hopeless at arcade games, but okay for sims if you can get over the tendency to over-control.

Contact: RC 0272 550900

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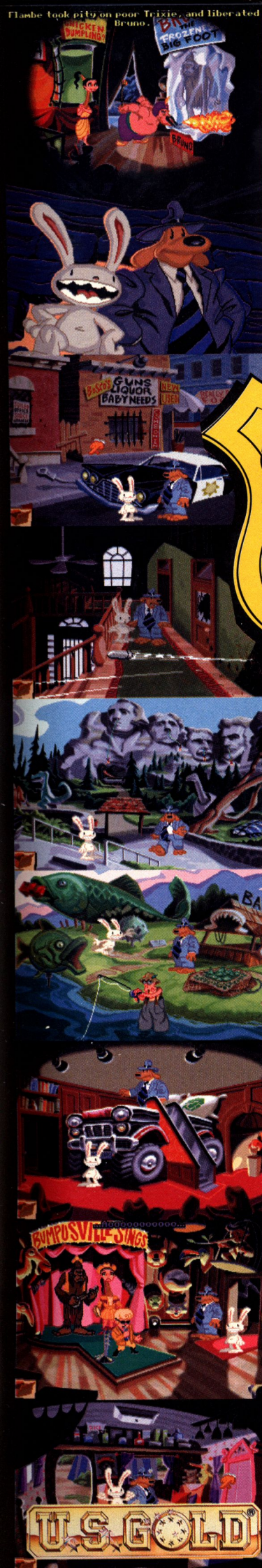
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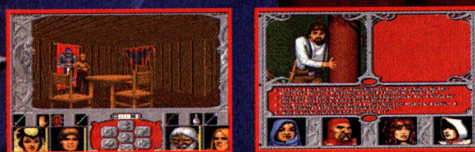
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Thrustmaster FCS

The Product: The fcs is modelled on the control column from an F4 Phantom, and has four independent buttons plus a thumb control, normally used for changing views in a flight sim. The stick itself is comfortable to use with a firm but very smooth action, precise buttons and a handrest built in. It has an unusual open throat which gives a wide range of movement; 10 feet of heavyweight cable, the de-rigueur screw plug and a large and sturdy base. It comes with a comprehensive manual, a list of supported games and a wad of background information. There is no calibration program supplied.

The Performance: The forte of this stick is the flight sim. Although too stiff for arcade games, it is possible to play non-flying games after some practice. Teamed up with the wcs throttle, there is presently no better way to fly a modern flight sim.

Contact: UK Distributors RC Simulations 0272 550900

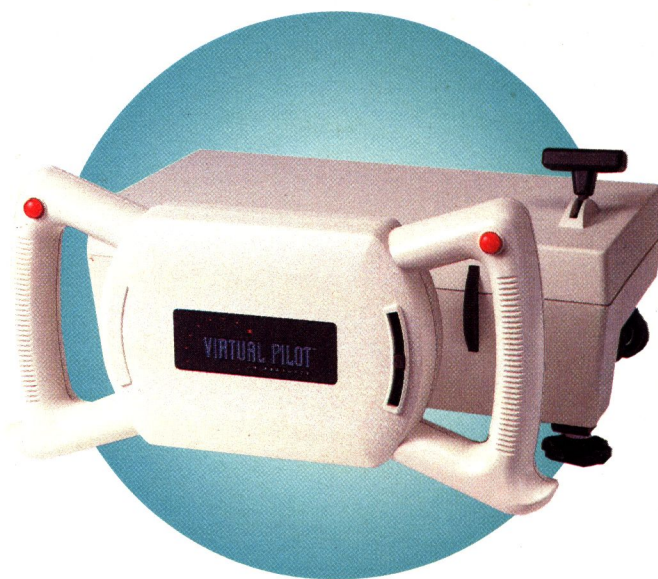


CH Flightstick Pro

The Product: Another contender for the least attractive stick, this four button plus 'coolie hat' plus throttle stick is superbly built, very comfortable to use and extremely smooth and precise. It is also stable, thanks to its large base. The rotary throttle is easy to use, and the buttons are smooth and precise. With an eight foot heavy duty cable, screw plug and excellent calibration and diagnostic software, this stick is almost beyond criticism.

The Performance: A very good all rounder. Although best at flight sims, it was fast and loose enough to cut it at arcade games. It really shone when accuracy and a delicate touch were needed, and was one of the few sticks that allowed me to land a MiG-29 safely. Like the Thrustmaster, the extra buttons are used to control a variety of flight sim functions, and are wasted in most other games.

Contact: CH 0494 488551



CH Virtual Pilot

The Product: This monster gets around the problem of base instability by clamping to the table. It is a two button yoke with a throttle control lever on top, and it is built to the usual CH quality. Actually using a yoke takes a little getting used to. The turning part is easy, but the pushing and pulling straight instead of just moving your wrist is an unusual feeling. Nonetheless, once you get into it, the yoke is easy to use, smooth and quite accurate. As usual, there is an eight foot cable topped off with a screw plug, and the manual contains a DIY BASIC program for calibration. There are two conventional trim controls, although the opportunity for free floating control is absent.

The Performance: Not very successful at combat flight sims, this needs to be used for ATP or FSS. The response is too slow and linear for dogfighting, so this is not a good device for arcade games.

Contact: CH 0494 488551



Suncom G-Force Yoke

The Product: Well built and simple, although not terribly attractive. An extremely practical design, offering the facility to lock the Y axis and just use it as a steering wheel. Fire buttons for each hand and easily reachable trimmers, along with a good quality cable and plug, a throttle and excellent Windows software complete the deal.

The Performance: Like its cousin above, this is really only suited to driving or air transport games. It is too slow for arcades and too linear for combat flight sims.

Contact: Suncom 0285 642211



Technoplus Eagle

The Product: A two button joystick with a turbofire option, six foot cable and nothing else outstanding. It feels very light and a little flimsy, and the thumb controller is rather vague. However, it is not unattractive, and the overall appearance is one of a quality product. It comes with a box.

The Performance: I confess that I was pleasantly surprised when I used this. Although, as it is a digital stick, flight sims were a case of yawing and rolling wildly across the sky until finally crashing, the performance of this pad in arcade type games was excellent. The thumb control still feels vague, but results would suggest that it isn't. It did okay in all the other games, and although not outstanding it didn't drop below par at all.

Contact: Technoplus 0604 768711



Dynapoint Gamestar

The Product: This is unusual in that it plugs into the keyboard socket, thus needing no gamecard. The six button pad connects to a control box, along with the keyboard, which in turn plugs into the keyboard socket. The control box, along with some fairly clever software, allows you to program all six buttons for different functions. The joystick is a little lightweight, although the control pad feels quite precise and has a neat push-in miniature joystick. It has about 10 feet of cable, and comes complete with a comprehensive user guide and a disk full of software (including an episode of *Wolfenstein*).

The Performance: This a bloody good pad and well specified to boot. The installation and programming kit works well, and is easy to use. It performed well in the arcade and sport games when calibrated, and didn't crash any sooner than the others on MiG-29.

Contact: Available on import



Phase 9 Phantom 2

The Product: This multi-function joystick is moulded in clear plastic so, if you really want to, you can see what goes on inside. Although it has six buttons, I think that they actually come down to buttons A and B rapid fire and normal. I am a little vague because there is no documentation with the pad, and the packing doesn't really help much. The overall appearance is quite pleasing, and the whole thing feels to be of a reasonable quality, although there were a couple of rough edges to the mouldings and the cable is only four feet long.

The Performance: Feels okay but unfortunately doesn't work that way. Very vague and imprecise, even on arcade games. Being digital, flight sims were a foregone conclusion, but this pad has the record for the most uncontrolled flight profile ever.

Contact: Euromax 0262 601006



Gravis PC Gamepad

The Product: This doesn't look like most joypads, being completely flat and sort of 'S' shaped. It is, however, beautifully put together, and features the ability to be set for either right or left-handed use at the flick of a switch. It has four buttons, which are semi-programmable and a really precise thumb controller with a screw-in mini joystick. It also has non-slip feet, which allow you to use it as a proper joystick if the mood takes you, and six feet of good quality cable. It comes complete with a utilities and diagnostics disk and the usual multi-lingual manual.

The Performance: Accurate, comfortable and fast, this is the perfect tool for arcade and platform games. Don't take it to a simulator though, because it will be bloody. Does okay at sports games, too.

Contact: Gravis 0101 31 40 110110 or UK distributors Zye Technology 0293 538666



Suncom Command Centre

The Product: This is different. An analogue gamepad. Well put together and comfortable, it's nevertheless not very nice to look at. It has five buttons, although it only functions as a two button pad with turbofire. Feels accurate and quite sensitive, and is equipped with six feet of quality cable and a DIY calibration routine.

The Performance: Proved to be a big let down at *Prince Of Persia* and the other arcade games, being inaccurate and fairly slow to respond. Okay for sports games but no good at all for flight sims. It would appear that the small throw makes it almost impossible to get accuracy, and the overall result is little better than a digital stick.

Contact: Suncom 0285 642211

Okay, so what would you buy?

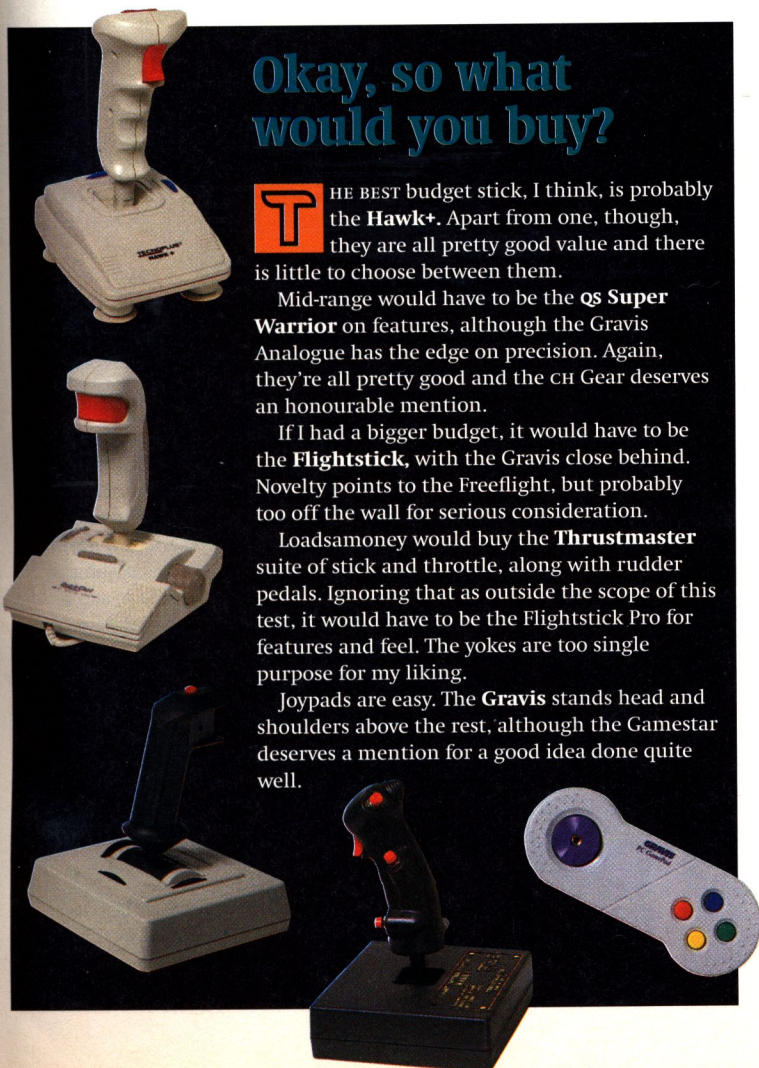
THE BEST budget stick, I think, is probably the **Hawk+**. Apart from one, though, they are all pretty good value and there is little to choose between them.

Mid-range would have to be the **qs Super Warrior** on features, although the Gravis Analogue has the edge on precision. Again, they're all pretty good and the CH Gear deserves an honourable mention.

If I had a bigger budget, it would have to be the **Flightstick**, with the Gravis close behind. Novelty points to the Freeflight, but probably too off the wall for serious consideration.

Loadsamoney would buy the **Thrustmaster** suite of stick and throttle, along with rudder pedals. Ignoring that as outside the scope of this test, it would have to be the Flightstick Pro for features and feel. The yokes are too single purpose for my liking.

Joypads are easy. The **Gravis** stands head and shoulders above the rest, although the Gamestar deserves a mention for a good idea done quite well.



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The world of football management games is as overcrowded as the Premier League, but still people cry out for more. **Paul Lakin** dons his sheepskin jacket before taking a look at one of the most promising of the new releases.

PATRICK, in his football management feature a couple of issues ago, noted that, although there are a lot of management games around, many of them being very playable, there's still nothing that really takes the biscuit. In this World Cup year there'll be no shortage of pretenders to the crown which is, in my view, currently held by *Championship Manager*. One of the most hopeful seems to be *Club Manager* from Teque which tackles some of the key weaknesses in earlier games.

Thank you Barry

With most football management games there is no real end to which you aspire. You just continue playing until you realise that, despite your indubitable talents for on-pitch strategy and healthy respect for the benefits of the long-ball game, you're never going to get Cambridge United to the top of the Premier League (I came close



(Above) A muddy pitch and no attendance, that sounds about right for the Abbey.

mind you, God knows I came close). And rather like the actor who realises he will never play the Dane, you think: 'Sod this for a game of toy soldiers,' and go back to *Mortal Kombat*.

Not so with *Club Manager*, in which you must retire at 65, (if only the same was true of Bert Millichip) giving you something to aim for and more incentive to play the game again to beat your previous record.

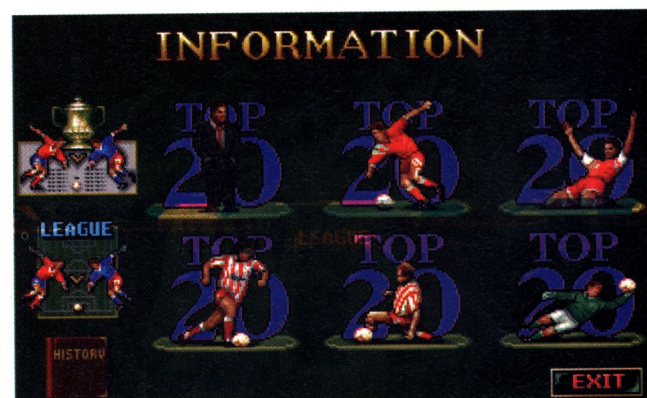
Like *Championship Manager* this will be a four-player game. However, unlike *Championship Manager* you won't be able to do the old trick of managing your favourite team plus a really good side, then selling yourself all their players at

'As with the match itself, the transfer system boasts a high degree of depth.'

knockdown prices (Ryan Giggs, £50,000? It's a deal). Any attempt at asset stripping will bring the unbridled wrath of the Board crashing down on your head. This will be a terrible blow to those like Patrick, who know no other way of playing management games.

As manager you will not only be responsible for the management, but also for all the background stuff like advertising, ticket prices and even the prices in the café. For people (like me) who don't feel this sort of thing is anything to do with the manager then it's possible to ignore this and default to a sort of happy medium. However, particularly for lower divisions, careful juggling of canteen prices can raise money for new players. Ten pence on a Mars bar and three pence on Bovril and a pie, and you'll soon be bringing Gazza back from Italy.

(Above) Modelling their away strip, Blackburn indulge in a bit of dirty dancing.

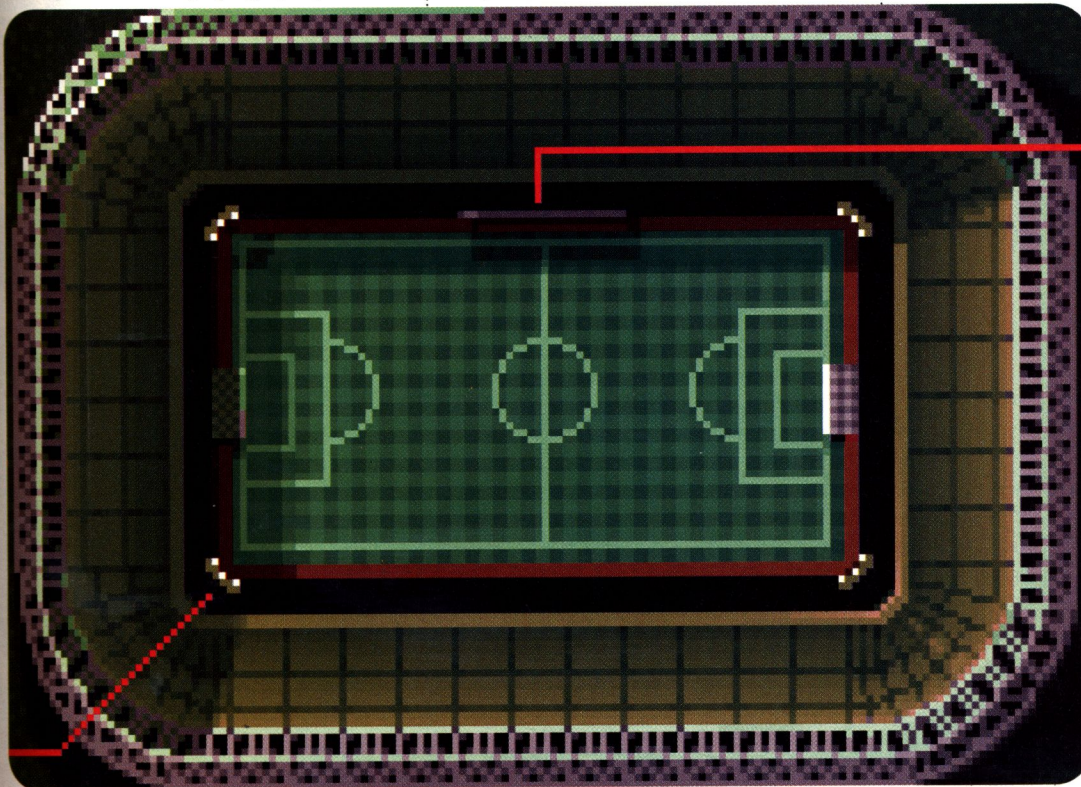


Over to you Alan...

The one backstage element that you simply can't turn a blind eye to is the boot room boys. Your coaches and scouts make a significant difference, especially to the development of young players. Such development is not pre-ordained, and bad choice of coaching staff can destroy a young player's career.

Having got your coaching staff in order it's time to prepare for the match. It's here that the game will really come into its own. Teague are very proud of the Artificial Intelligence in the game (programmed by Justin Heyes-Jones, a graduate in AI) so your tactical decisions really matter. Attempting the old five-man midfield, five-man attack cheat will simply result in the opposition hoofing the ball over your midfield and making a mess of your goal difference. This means a blending of players and an intelligent choice of playing style (based on

highlights. The only game to previously include highlights was the gone but not forgotten *The Manager*, in which the highlights were drawn from a data base of pre-programmed events. In *Club Manager* (where the entire game is 'played') the highlights are actually generated by the process of the game. You'll be able to choose whether you see just the goals or other highlights such as corners, penalties, dazzling runs up the pitch, and other such spectacular plays.



your coach's educated guess as to what formation the opposition will play).

The key difference with *Club Manager*'s tactical preparation is that, as well as choosing a player's position on the pitch, you can choose his area of operation. So you can opt to have your defenders playing like wing backs, prowling right up into the opposition's half or keep them back in the first quarter of the pitch. An example of how you might use this is if you have a striker who ranks high on skill but low on stamina, then you can do a Greaves and leave him hanging around the edge of the opponent's 18 yard box (he will react intelligently to potential offsides). At last, a game where it's worth signing Jan Molby.

Let's look at the replay Trevor

Where *Club Manager* looks set to score very highly is in its representation of the match. Out are the bar graphs; in are the

Currently, this section of the game is still in development, but the sprites are bigger and better-drawn than in most other arcade football games so, as long as the speed and animation are there, this could be the very feature that lifts *Club Manager* into premier place.

Gary, old chum?

Having watched your beloved team respond to promotion by getting completely trounced in every match, and looking as out of place as Dion Dublin in a Man Utd shirt, it's time to buy.

As with the match itself, the transfer system boasts a fairly high degree of depth. Simply looking at the stats when buying a player is not enough: you also need to look at the team they're playing in, what style that team plays, what the coach is like (hopefully a nice warm one with comfy seats and an on-board video) and any other factors that might affect his performance.

With all players there are three 'hidden' stats: intelligence, vision and temperament. These are important with younger players since they affect their ability to develop.

Des sez

The proof of the game is in the playing, so it's virtually impossible to assess *Club Manager* without spending a couple of seasons battling away in black and amber shirts with the fear of relegation hanging over you. However, it's got some excellent ideas in it, and if the AI and replays work anything like as well as they're intended it could set new standards for the next generation of management games. **Z**

Minimum Memory: 2Mb

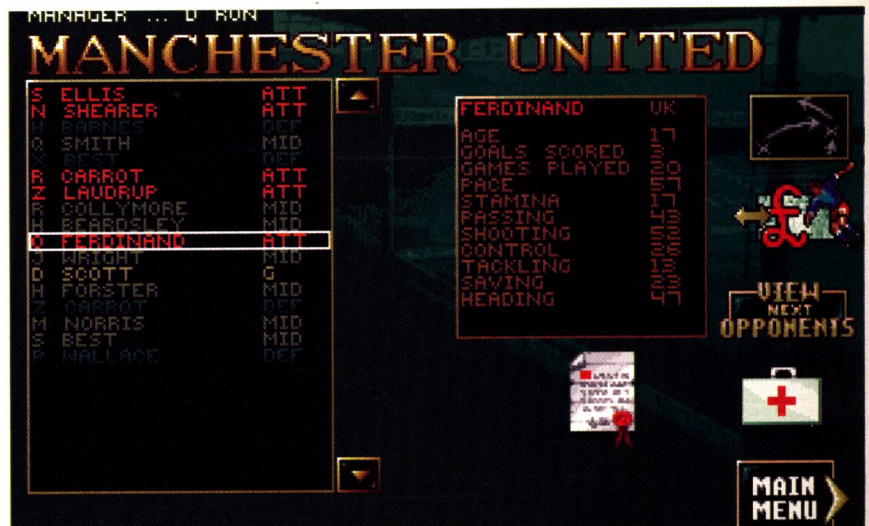
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PC ZONE

reviews

Games reviews is what *PC Zone* is all about and this is where the reviews start. On the next 50 pages you'll find reviews of all the latest disk based software. However, before you launch yourself into the most authoritative reviews pages around you might like to check up on what it all means.



ALL GAMES receive an overall mark out of 100. So by definition that's a percentage but if you want to call it 'Out of a hundred' then you go ahead and call it 'Out of a hundred'. As a rough guide to interpreting the scores here's the guidelines we give to reviewers. (Not that they ever read them mind you. It can be quite heartbreaking at times...)

90+ (PC Zone Classic) Highly original idea or an exceptional, near 'definitive' version of an old idea. Flawless in all departments and crammed to overflowing with long-term playability. Alternatively the software company took the reviewer to Paris for the weekend.

80-89 (PC Zone Recommended)

Extremely well executed strong in all/all but one department. High degree of originality.

70-79 Strong idea, well executed. Not necessarily very original. However, weaknesses do not seriously impair playability, and it has a reasonably long life.

60-69 Games falling into the 'If you like this style of game you'll like this if not you won't' category.

50-59 Seen it all before, take it or leave it. Nothing special to recommend it but not abysmal either.

40-49 Dodgy. Still playable but probably only the once.

30-39 Seriously weak in idea and execution.

WHAT'S ON OUR HARD DISK?

Some games get installed, reviewed and then deleted. Others hang around a lot longer. This is what's currently nestling on our hard drive. Not necessarily the best games around, but the ones we keep coming back to.

Championship Manager '94

Spider Run

Sim City 2000

Doom

Seawolf

20-29 The game is hopeless or the software company forgot the £50 cash bribe.

10-19 Bin jobs

0-9 It didn't work. It crashed the PC and got jammed in the disk drive.

Is there anything worse than buying a game only to find it's not compatible with your machine? Yes, lots of things. Still it is a pain (and a waste of money) so check out the Specs box for a guideline to what memory, graphic and sound support you will need (or can use) with each game. However please note this is only a guideline, you should also check the packaging or confirm information with the retailer or software company.

Finally, the In Perspective box; often all that a review is saying is that a game is as good as that one but not quite as good as the other one. In Perspective attempts to illustrate this visually by rating the game in terms of other similar product. The 'scores' given in this graph are relative to each other i.e. all examples might score highly in their own right but not against each other. ☹



Requiring inspiration for the intro to his review of EA's *Seawolf*, Duncan MacDonald immediately reached for a dictionary: 'submarine, *n.* A vessel which can be submerged at will and

which can travel under the water.' And you can't argue with that, can you?



IF YOU'VE read the intro you'll now know, without any doubt in your mind whatsoever, that submarines are vessels which are capable of travelling beneath the water. It's nice to clear these things up, isn't it? What you probably won't know, however, is that (a) America is now back 'at war' with the New Soviet Union and (b) that this game is in fact *688 Attack Sub 2*. There are many other things you won't be aware of either, but let's take these as we come to them and start back at the beginning...

1. Submarines are underwater aeroplanes, with missiles.
 2. And the one you're in charge of in *Seawolf* is nuclear-powered, meaning it can stay underwater for a zillion years without ever needing to surface.
 3. Johnny Russia, as said previously, is back on the war-path.
 4. And it's down to you to stop him!
- So there you go. It's hide 'n' seek at 50 fathoms. Just like *688 Attack Sub*, the prequel.

But not 'exactly' the same, surely?

Er, you'd be surprised actually. Now, I was going to save this for a kind of bombshell at the end of the review, but if you're familiar with the original game then my 'stunning climax' would turn out to be more of a blindingly obvious footnote. So I'm going to use it now, while it's still newsworthy. *Seawolf* is totally identical to *688 Attack Sub*.

Totally identical?

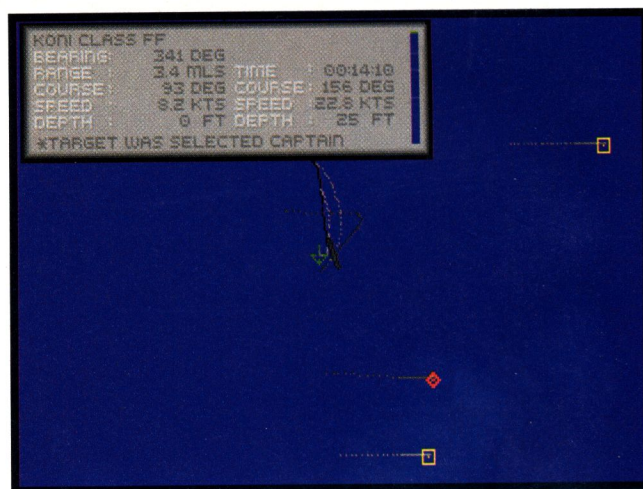
Hmm, okay, so maybe that's going a tad over the top – but it's worth exaggerating sometimes to get the point home. There are revamped graphics, loads of excellent digitised speech and sound

effects, far more missions and there's even the new all-singing, all-dancing Sonar Waterfall Display... but at the end of the day anybody who's played *688 Attack Sub* is going to be in for something of a déjà vu.

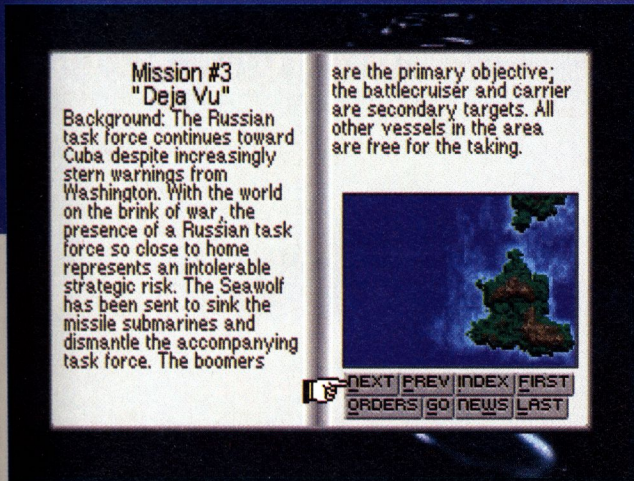
Seawolf is one of those games that seems to have been a labour of love, and the designers obviously felt, in an 'if it ain't broke don't fix it' kind of way, that they didn't want to tamper too much with their first born. There is, however, one thing they maybe should have tampered with, right down to the genetic level... and that's the interface. *688 Attack Sub* was a nightmare, and *Seawolf* is worse. Controlling the submarine's many operations (especially in critical situations when the shit is literally pouring through the fan and being plastered over the walls like paint) is a bit like being marooned on an island with only Jeffrey Archer for company. In other words, it's horrible.

Newcomers

Time to get back to those of you who aren't familiar with *688 Attack Sub*. Okay, the submarine in *Seawolf* is controlled via a series of menus – like hitting F3 will drop down the main Weapons menu. On this menu you can then either point and click with the mouse or use the relevant hotkeys. You can, for instance, load torpedo tubes, flood them, fire and so on – or you can even pop further down, into sub-menus, where you might (as an example) 'guide' a torpedo manually. To fire or guide a torpedo, however, you need to



SEAWOLF

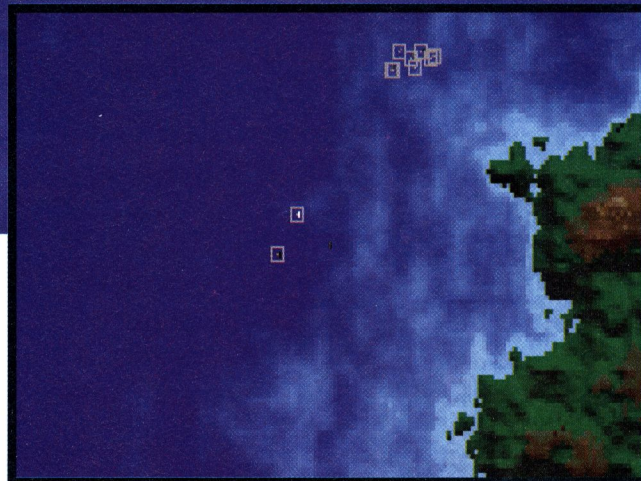


either have a target already nominated or you have to set up a series of secondary waypoints. And to do this you need to make sure you're on the right screen. And then you'll be needing to open another menu.

Fiddly? Yes, but there are always the hotkeys. Unfortunately you won't have much fun with them either, and I'll tell you why here and now (oh, and I'm talking from the viewpoint of a first time user here, rather than a hardened salty *Seawolf* dog). Okay, here goes: the functions (all eight trillion of them) have not only been assigned to rather weird keys (no 'P' for periscope or 'D' for dive here), but the majority require you to simultaneously hold down the CTRL key, too. It tends to be that the hotkeys you use least are the more palatable single presses, while the most useful ones are the bastards who've been twinned with CTRL. Add to this the aforementioned illogicalities regarding the 'choice' of keys and you have something approaching a brick wall right at the beginning of



"Where's he gone?" cry the enemy subs. "I'm down at 15 squillion feet with a creaking hull" you whisper...

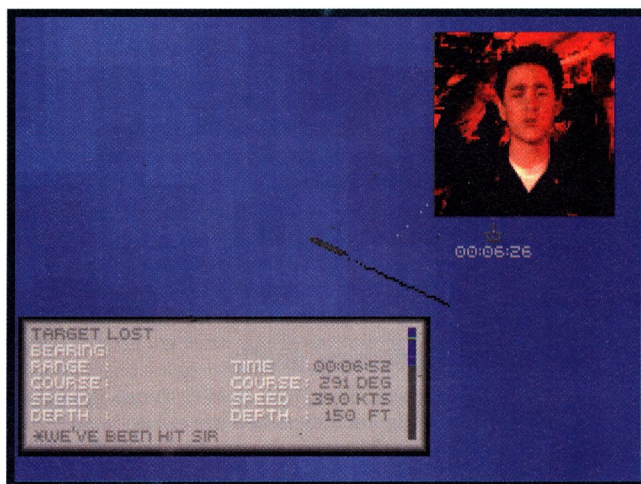


(Previous page, top) Through your periscope you see your harpoon missile break the surface: moreover every single Russian ship, sub and helicopter on the map now knows your exact location. Crush depth and silent running anyone? (This page, top) On second thoughts, why not hang around and enjoy the explosion? Not a wise move. (Far left) Mission three, what more can I say? (Near left) Grey squares mean you know they're there, but you don't yet know what they are. (Previous page, bottom) Loads of dots move about, and you are transfixed - lost in your imaginary undersea world. (This page, far left) The underwater camera view. (Near left) A digitised sailor gives you the latest engine room body count.

the overall *Seawolf* learning curve (which is hard enough anyway). Actually, I think I'll share a couple of 'jokes' with you - each a gem. Ready? 'Did you hear the one about the two blokes in the pub who wanted to access the Waterfall Display? By the time they'd remembered to press CTRL F, it was drinking up time!' (No laughter). 'I'm not saying my mother-in-law is fat, but when she tried to use the sonar, her finger and thumb became jammed in the CTRL and P keys!' (No laughter). Get the idea? Even the PAUSE command is tricky... CTRL G, for Christ's sake. So to sum up thus far: beware the *Seawolf* interface, for it is a hard beast to tame.

But it gets better, right?

Yes, it does get better actually because, if you force yourself to stop being annoyed by the control system, you soon find that what you have left (just like 688 *Attack Sub* before it) is an absolutely engrossing game. To the uninitiate, simulated submarine warfare



(Top strip) Heaps of ships and a fair amount of smoke prompt you to sing your 'special song': La da da, hee hee hee, I'm a salty dog, I'm the king of the sea!

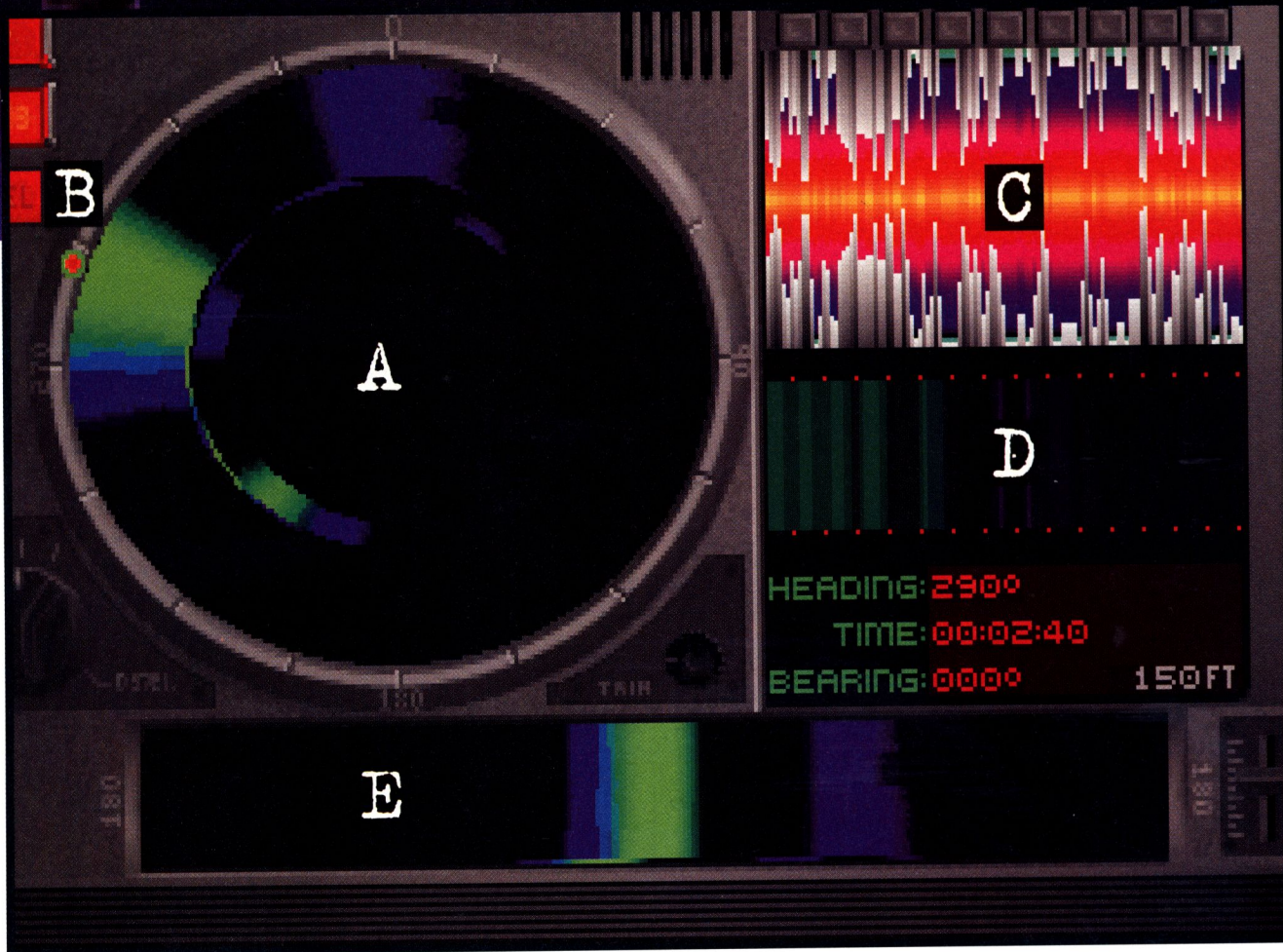
(Main) The Sonar Waterfall Display prompts a different tune: 'My powerful sonar, can probe the deepest chasms, but I still don't know, if octopuses have orgasms' (This rather crap caption will only make sense after reading Mr Cursor. Ed).

(Below) What happened next? (Next page, from top to bottom) What do you get when you cross a torpedo with a cargo ship?

An ex cargo ship, boom boom.

But then you get hit yourself and the screen goes all squiffy and the crew start screaming. And then there's an apres mission newscast informing the nation that you were crap. Some orders.

A page of the ID booklet.



must seem like the most boring thing on the planet. I used to think the same thing myself, as it happens: 'Have you got any submarine games?' a friend once asked. 'You're joking,' I replied, 'they're the most boring things on the planet!' But they're not, as I now readily admit (although not to members of the opposite sex, obviously). Sub sims are slow, yes, but as long as they're done properly, the atmosphere prevails. And when it comes down to atmosphere, *Seawolf* hits the nail right on the head.

A large part of it is down to the sound because, let's face it, there's not much to look at. Seeing as the general idea is not to surface unless you absolutely have to, most of your time will be spent looking at the satellite view – which is just a map basically. A map with little dots moving around on it. But, thanks to the sound, you do somehow feel as if you're under the water. Oh dear. I can't believe I just said that. It sounds incredibly poncey, I know – but it's

true. You look at the map, you watch your dot heading towards another dot, you see a third and fourth dot in the distance, but in your mind's eye there's a picture straight out of *Voyage To The Bottom Of The Sea*, complete with giant octopuses and bubbles.

Periscope death

Try as you might to avoid it, there's going to be that moment when you can no longer resist the temptation to visit the surface. Enter bitmap city! Yes, like *688 Attack Sub*, all the ships (and helicopters) are simple

bitmaps. They're nicely detailed, for sure, but they're still just bitmaps and, as such, are a bit limited on the 'view from all angles' front (ie they jerk suddenly rather than turn gradually).

In the MicroProse *Silent Service* games, which also used bitmaps, this was annoying (after all, real WWII sub warfare relied totally on visual contact). You'd plonk up your periscope and be treated to the sight of loads of giant blocky blobs travelling in God knows what direction, and so you'd have to consult the moving map. In *Seawolf*, however, it's not so bad for two reasons: (a) the bitmaps are more

detailed and scale better, and (b) your torpedoes are computer controlled... you set the target on the map screen, call up the weapons menu, fire, and then just use the periscope to watch the resulting explosion. Or you do to begin with, because after a while you tend to stay away from the surface like the manual suggests – and concentrate on using the thermal layers to your advantage instead. (Did you know that the different thermal layers of the ocean bend sound in much the same way that a prism bends light? I didn't, but I do now. You can use this fact to give yourself a very confusing sonar signature: 'Where's he gone?' cry the enemy subs. 'I'm down at 15 squillion feet with a creaking hull,' you whisper to yourself.)

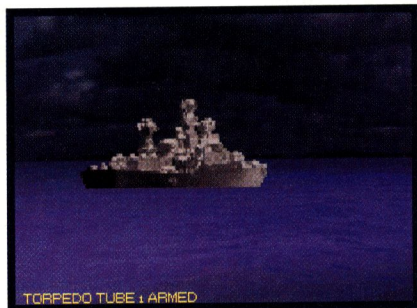
The sonar waterfall display

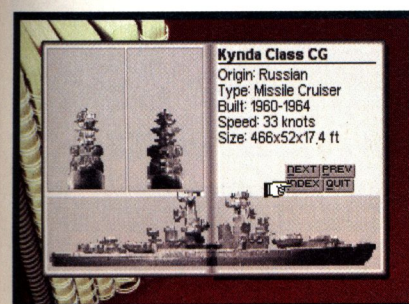
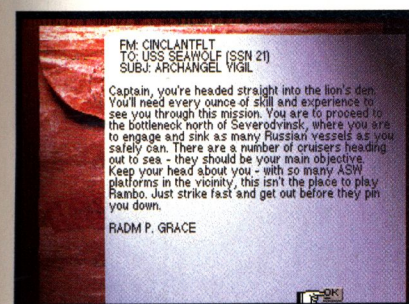
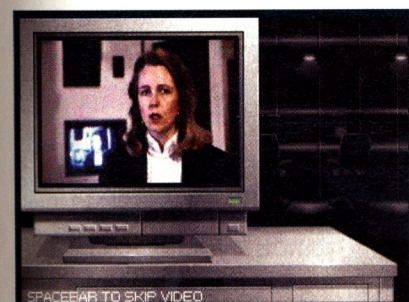
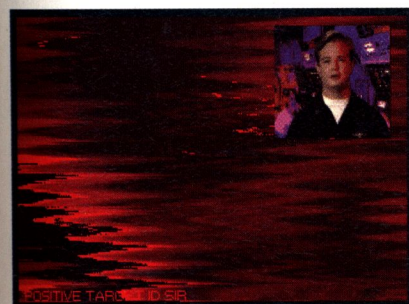
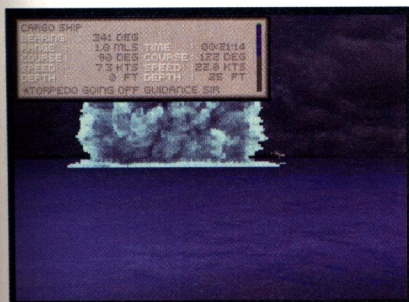
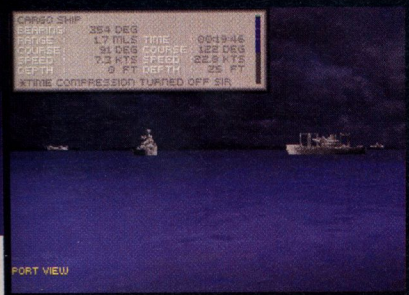
Da-da! This is the new bit. There was a sort of mini cut-down version of the technology in *688 Attack Sub*, but here's the whole nine yards *Seawolf* extravaganza. And it's scary. Very scary indeed. But it's also, at the same time, the most brilliant thing in the game. Here's the story. Your computer-controlled sonar operator is solid and reliable, but has inherited some kind of dodgy chromosome meaning he's extremely slow in locating and identifying potential threats. And guess what that means? I'm afraid it does, yes. You're best off doing all this stuff yourself, as follows:

a) The main display (above): think of this as a compass... with your sub right in the middle. As distant signals are picked up by the sub's sonar, so a colour wash will bleed in from the relevant point around the circumference. Different colours indicate different types of contact. You pick up signals better towards the front of your sub, by the way, and the strengths of the signals from all directions are affected by your speed (seeing as the faster your props are turning, the more cavitation is produced, confusing the overall picture. In fact at flank speed you're completely blind).

b) Blob thingy (above): by moving this little blob around the main display, you can aim your sonar directly at any signal you like the look (or sound) of, then focus upon and analyse it further...

c & d) Signal analyser (above): this has two parts. The upper part (c) indicates the strength of the signal while the lower part (d)





is the *Seawolf* computer's spectrum analysis of it. Using the reference documentation which comes with the game, you're meant to be able to work out what the distant vessel actually is. (It might even be a whale). You also have to take into account certain variables such as your own depth, speed and so forth.

e) Contact bearing display (main screen opposite): this is not unlike the Padlock View in *Falcon 3*. It's the Main Circular Display, essentially, but it's a wrap-around version. Signals in the centre are straight ahead and signals to the far left and far right are directly behind. Anything in-between is, er... in-between. Yes? No? Oh, I know, imagine this. Cut the strip out, enlarge it on a photocopier, and wrap it around your head. Now rotate your head but not the strip. Got it now? Thank God for that.

Trip out, man!

When you're in the Sonar Waterfall Display room, it's very easy to lose your mind. Why? Because of the sonics. *Seawolf* has excellent general 'action' effects anyway, but when you're tracking targets in the Waterfall room it's something else altogether. If you played this game in an isolation tank you'd probably never reappear. Aldous Huxley would have found the experience more enjoyable than mescaline.

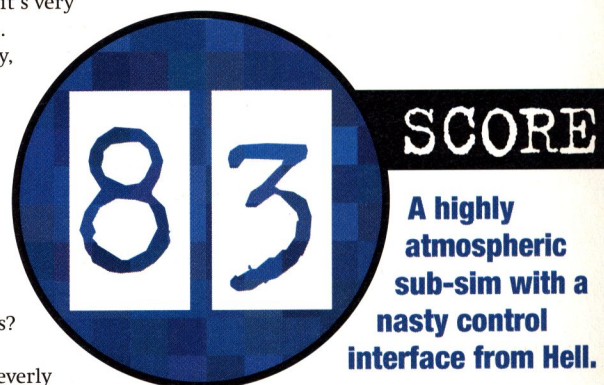
What am I talking about? I'll tell you. You know those melancholy echoey distant whale calls you hear on documentaries? And you know white noise? And the sounds you get when you're under the water in large, crowded swimming pools? And the 'choppy chop chop' sounds of propellers chewing up water? Well samples of all these are cleverly mixed together to give the full underwater experience. Furthermore the volumes of each sound weave up and down, and in and out of one another, depending upon where you're aiming your sonar detector. It gets to the point where the digitised voice of your computer controlled sonar bloke says 'Captain, I've detected a torpedo,' and all you can be bothered to do, in your semi-trance, is aim the sonar towards the incoming missile to see how well it'll mix in with the overall 'sea-song'. Most distressing.

So *Seawolf's* not so shite after all?

It's funny how you can change your mind while writing a review. For instance when I started this one I was so annoyed by *Seawolf's* general interface that I was determined to see only the bad things. And I was determined, at the same time, to pompously state what I wanted of a sub-sim myself. I want *Doom* in a tube. I want to walk around. To see the crew panicking in 3D. To see the lights flash on and off when a depth charge goes off nearby. To walk into the engine room and see everyone working. To touch the map table and be taken into map mode. To lie on my bunk and sleep. To touch the periscope and see texture-mapped polygon ships on an undulating ocean. To promote and demote. To say: 'Fire one, fire two,' to the torpedo geezers. To hear Dickie Attenborough scream 'Captain, Jock's gone crazy!'

But at the end of the day, and to get real for a moment, the game I really want doesn't exist. *Seawolf*, however, does exist. And while the overall approach may be getting a bit long in the tooth, there's no denying that the atmosphere it produces excels. (As long as you have the right soundcard, of course). It's going to be interesting to see what Dynamix has done with *Aces Of The Deep*, but for now, if I had to answer the question 'What's the best sub-sim currently available?' the answer would have to be *Seawolf*. And maybe that same answer will hold for the next nine months. Who can tell? Basically the sub-sim genre is still so untapped that there's no real 100% classic benchmark, so vary my score as you see fit. ☐

'The atmosphere *Seawolf* produces excels, (as long as you have the right soundcard.)'



Minimum Memory: 640k

Minimum Processor: 386 25MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 19Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Soundcards Supported: Roland Sound Canvas, Sound Blaster Pro

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Can also be played in 2-player mode via network (Net Bios compatible). Stereo headphones recommended.

Price: £44.99 **Release Date:** March

Publisher: Electronic Arts **Tel:** 0753 549442

IN PERSPECTIVE

To do a 'fish in a small pond' analogy, you'd have to say that *Seawolf* was a tad larger than its few chums, but tastes much the same.

688 Attack Sub

Seawolf

Silent Service II



Righteous Fire is a mission disk for *Privateer*, with a new storyline and everything! **Chris Anderson**, zealous member of the Lick Wing Commander's Shiny Boots Society, loads it up.



Base Command has instructed me to notify you of a recent theft.



WHEN *Wing Commander* first appeared on the PC, journos from every games mag in the universe were falling over themselves trying to describe how sexy, smart and Godlike it was. When *X-Wing* came along with its 'alright if you're willing to put up with the polygon graphics', the same journos did a prompt about-turn and decided *Wing Commander* wasn't brilliant at all, but was in fact totally crap. It suddenly became trendy to marvel at how fast and smooth *X-Wing* was and kick *Wing Commander* in the goolies at every opportunity. Moody gits or what?

Wing Commander rules OK

I liked *Wing Commander* then, and I like it now. The graphics are excellent, the combat sequences are tense and exciting, and the storylines for both *Wing Commanders 1* and *2* are captivating and atmospheric. *Privateer* is *Wing Commander* with *Elite*-style trading and exploration. If you like *Wing Commander*, you'll like *Privateer*. Similarly, if you like *Privateer*, you'll like *Righteous Fire* which is the rest of the game (sorry, mission disk).

Apart from a few ship upgrades that weren't available in the original game, the only thing that's changed is the storyline. At the start of the game you are told that some thieving rotter has nicked the Steltek gun you fought so hard to get at the end of *Privateer*. Also, the Retros, (religious fanatics who think they're well hard but aren't), are up to something decidedly shady. It was

probably them who nicked your sexy gun, seeing as how they've already kidnapped Hunter Toth, the wimpy idiot you had to escort back to Oxford in the last game.

X-Wing smells

As was the case with *Privateer*, as soon as you get involved with the main plot, the fights become almost impossible to win. You'll have to do lots of trading or mercenary work to build up the cash to buy all the new ship upgrades before you can even think about getting involved in the big boy's stuff. As luck would have it, you can import that Centurion with all the mod cons it took you bloody ages to get in the first game, so

you're not exactly starting from scratch. Anyone who has already played *Privateer* will already know the most lucrative trade routes, so it's simply

a case of zooming around buying and selling, making lots of loot, then popping off to Oxford to kick some Retro butt.

The only disappointment with *Righteous Fire* is there aren't any new ships to play around with. Ship upgrades are all well and good, but it would be nice to have a new fighter with more than one MFD which could be configured to the player's tastes. Apart from that, if you are looking for an excuse to blow the dust off your old Centurion and pay another visit to the Gemini sector, *Righteous Fire* is just what you've been waiting for. **Z**

8

0

SCORE

Privateer fans definitely won't be disappointed with this one.

Minimum Memory: 4Mb

Minimum Processor: 386/25MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 4Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA (SVGA)

Soundcards Supported: Roland, Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Rap 10

Controls Supported: Mouse, joystick, keyboard

Comments: Not a complete game. You must own *Privateer* to play *Righteous Fire*.

Price: £19.99 **Publisher:** Electronic Arts

Release Date: Out now **Telephone:** 0753 549442



(Top left) Another Retro ship gets a formal introduction to my new fusion cannons.
(Top) Security tells you your Steltek gun's been pinched.
(Above) Buy and sell your droids to make a profit.

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Mark Cohen *The Sports Game Review*

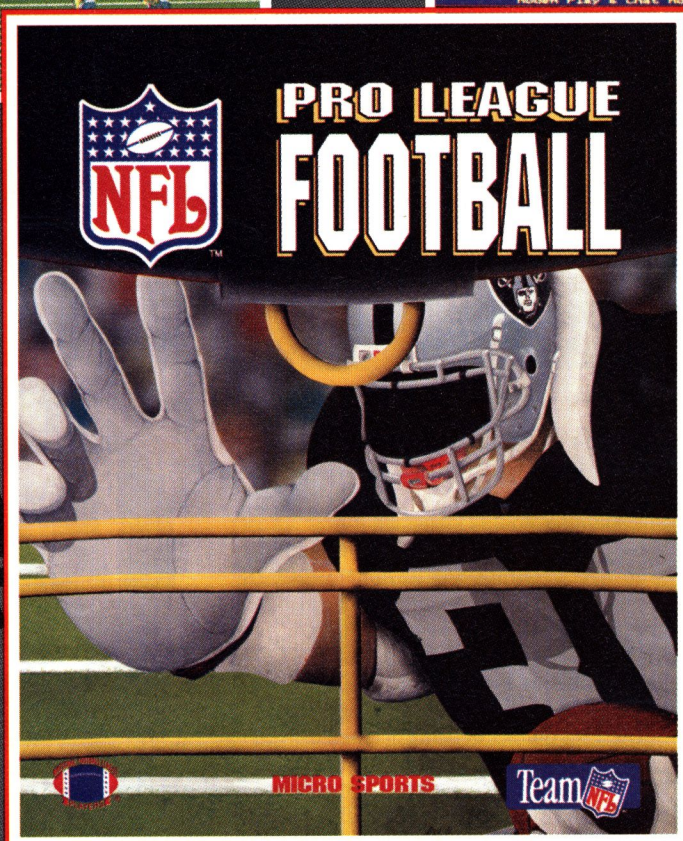
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FANTASTIC DIZZY

They're both ovoid in shape, have been around for years and aren't as fresh as they might be. *Fantastic Dizzy* and Paul Bakin get together and talk about old times.



I'VE ALL BEEN there. Sitting in the pub or at a party when someone lets slip that you play computer games. You watch anxiously as people begin to drift away. 'No, don't get me wrong,' you cry desperately. 'Computer games aren't what you think. They're not all sexist violence or childish cuteness, there are some really excellent, intelligent products. Honest.' You then go on to list examples of the games that someone would



be a fool not to be impressed by. The chances are *Fantastic Dizzy* would not be one of them.

The *Dizzy* games started life way back in the days of 8-bit computer games and resurfaced on the 8-bit NES console. On that format they represented great value for money, tending to be less expensive than their competitors yet containing plenty of pretty taxing gameplay. However, without wishing to sound like some sort of computer snob, these games really are out of place on the PC.

The genre is what in the old days, (when you could go and see Arthur Askey for a shilling and still have change for the bus ride home), used to be called arcade adventure. *Dizzy's* girlfriend Daisy has been kidnapped by the evil wizard Zaks and he must rescue her. For some reason this necessitates him collecting 250 stars that are lying around his world, (the reason is that they each represent a magic unit

and you need 250 of these to enter Zaks castle - in case you are interested).

As *Dizzy* wanders or rolls about, there are various objects he can collect to assist in his quest (such as keys, weed-killer, gold and rum), though he can only carry three of these at a time. There's no fighting as such, though *Dizzy* does get damaged by bumping into those well known predators - snails. One of the other main hazards is water since *Dizzy*, not being a bad egg, doesn't float.

Eggstreme prejudice

Let's just pretend that I didn't think *Dizzy* was a terribly unoriginal game entirely lacking in the depth or variety that you'd expect on the PC. Let's just pretend that I

'The problem is that the gameplay in *Dizzy* is too simple and too similar.'

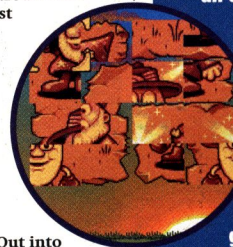
thought it was a classic piece of software from the days when gameplay was more important than graphics. In this world of make believe would I give it a good score?

No. The animation is limited, little more than an egg rolling and occasionally bouncing back when it collides with an enemy. And not only is the animation limited, it is also slow. Even with the background graphics switched off we're in snailville.

There's a danger of being accused of hypocrisy here. Haven't we always said that big is not necessarily best, and that there's a virtue in simplicity. The problem is that the gameplay in *Dizzy* is too simple and too similar. But, you might say, it's aimed at children. It still costs the best part of 30 quid I reply. **Z**



(Above) Things get very arboreal in the first section of *Dizzy* as our egg-shaped hero wanders around the leafy forest glades.



(Far left) Out into the mean streets and *Dizzy* has to deal with some rather peculiar looking characters.



Cut And Paste

True to form *Fantastic Dizzy* has a sub game. Every now and again our ovoid adventurer comes across a piece of parchment showing a picture of himself and a wizard. This picture then mysteriously shuffles itself and within a set time limit (appropriately measured by an egg timer) you must rearrange the pieces to recreate the picture and win a bonus life. It's rather like those little puzzles you get in Christmas crackers and about as much fun.



SCORE

**Wrong time.
Wrong format.
Wrong price.**

(Below) Mining, involves looking for stars! Quite.



Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 286/12MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 1.2 Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster, AdLib

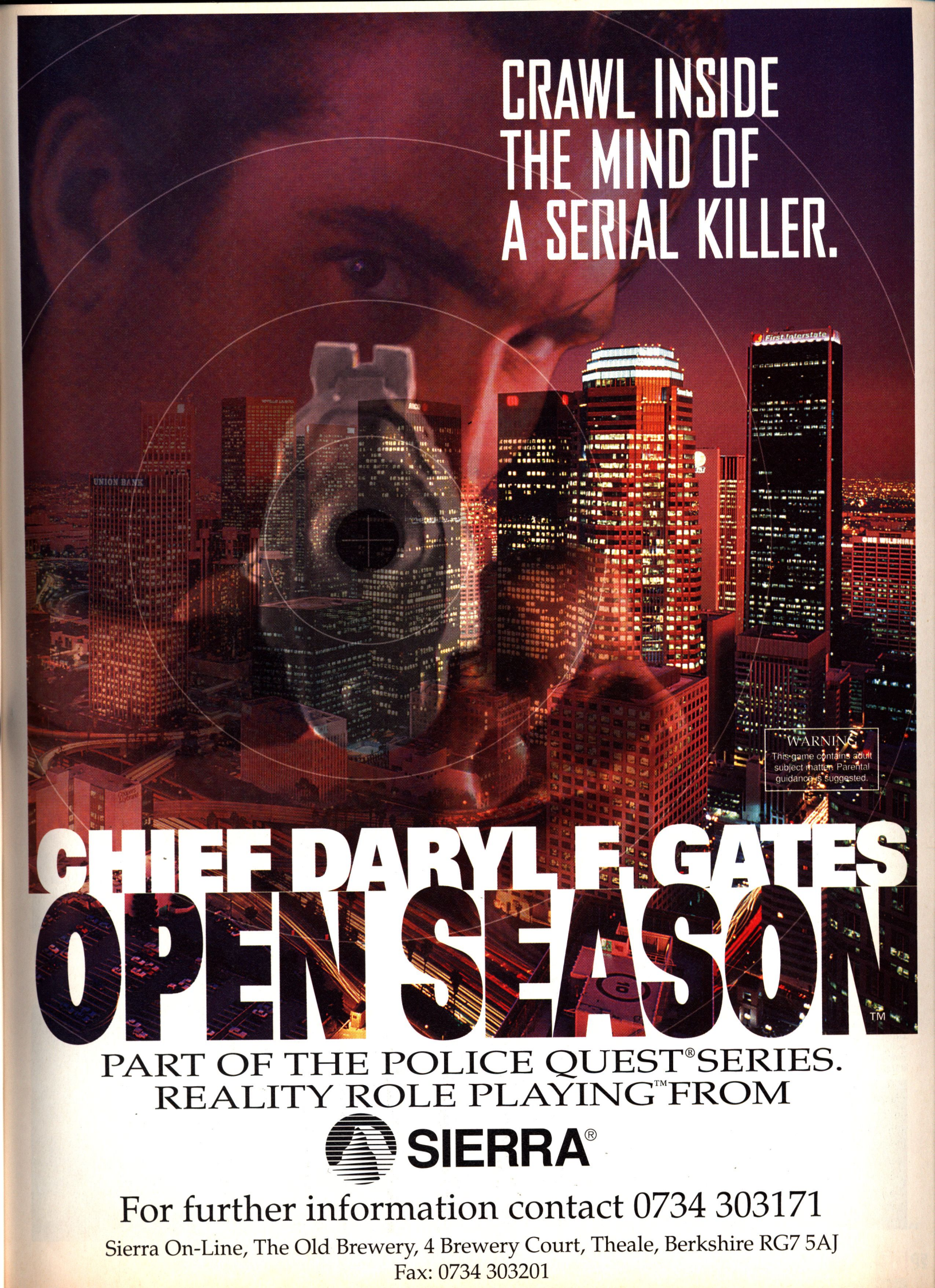
Controls: Joystick, keyboard

Comments: Can also run in Windows..

Price: £29.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Code Masters

Telephone: 0926 814 132



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CANNON FODDER

Patrick McCarthy is the only one in this office who'd be real-life cannon fodder, so naturally our aristocratic, commissioned officer-material editor gave the game to him.



SENSIBLE SOFTWARE seem to have sold their souls to Satan. This is the only explanation I can find for their uncanny knack of producing games with this high a degree of addictiveness. Not content with making the finest football game on the planet, they're now trying to do the same with the tactical shoot 'em-up.

This supernatural bargaining has had a bit of a bad press in the past, and obviously isn't going to be much fun for the Sensiblettes later in life, but it's a good thing for the rest of us in the meantime. It also shows that Satan knows a thing or two about computer games, of course. More than his rival, anyway – I mean look at the stuff that's produced by people who've made a pact with God. Prayer-words Scrabble, I think the market leader's called.

Anyway, *Cannon Fodder's* a shoot 'em-up in which you control a small squad of soldiers as they attempt to wreak havoc on the countryside. The soldiers look like *Sensible Soccer* footballers in army kit. It's level-based, each level being divided into a number of missions.

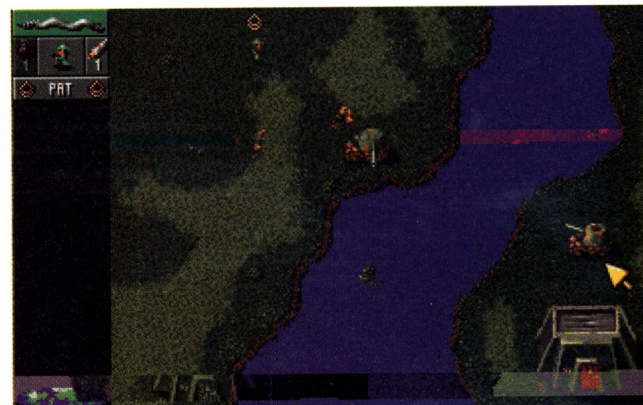
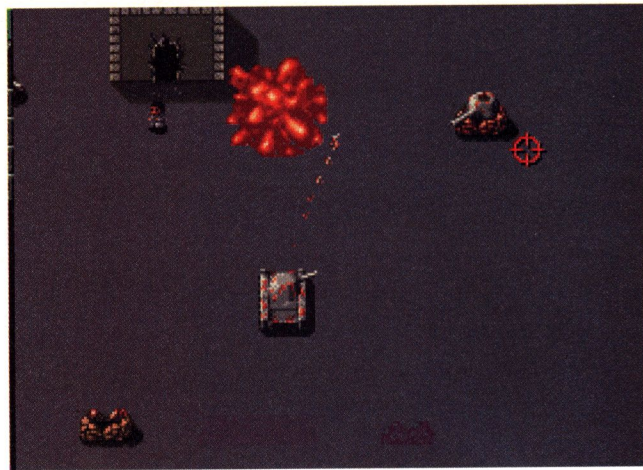
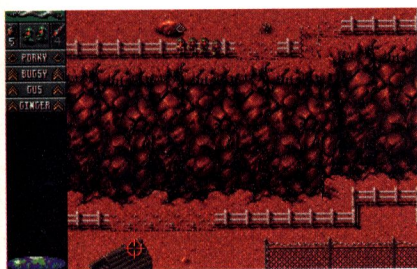
'As you's expect, what we're talking about here is scarcely-controlled mayhem.'

You're given 15 men at the start of each level, and usually have three or four men at your disposal per mission, the idea

being to carry out the orders you're given (kill all the enemy, or destroy all the enemy buildings, or whatever) without slaying all your own men in the process. If they do all die, you start again with another group of eager suckers. If things are going badly and one of your favourites is going to perish, you can give up and start the mission again with the survivors (and re-booting will sometimes come in handy, too).

Assuming you do get the hang of things, every time you make it through a complete set of missions and advance to the next level you get another 15 men. At first, this seems like an inordinate amount; later you'll be grateful for every one. Each level successfully completed sees your surviving men gaining promotion and your dead getting put on the high-score table (if they lasted long enough to kill lots of enemies).

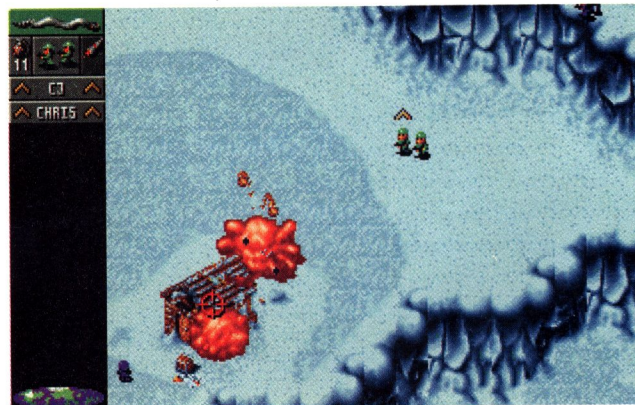
It's no use – we're failures. We might as well end it all here and now. Just one step and it'll all be over...

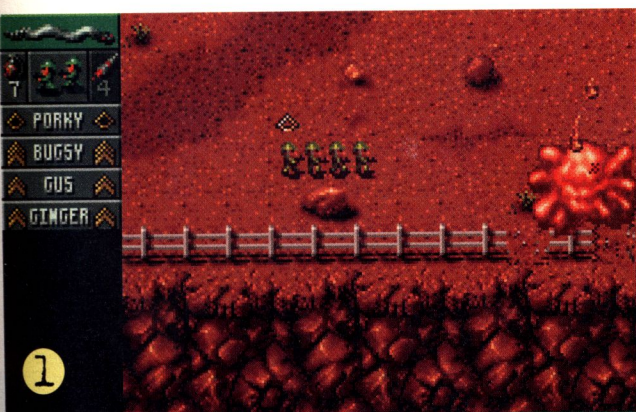


Going for a swim with a couple of bloody great guns trained on you is not a good idea...



Generally speaking, you should blow the suckers into the ground before donning your swimsuit.





Four Go Mad In Dorset

This secluded, tranquil valley in the heart of rural England lies dormant beneath the benevolent gaze of the warm afternoon sun. Birds sing, bees buzz about their business, and flies buzz about other

people's business. Little do the inhabitants realise the horror that is about to befall them as their erstwhile sleepy hollow, full to bursting with the wonders of nature, is visited by a gaggle of deranged killers on a walking holiday.

1 The picturesque fence running along the edge of the gorge, made by old Mr Radamanthus' grandfather back before the Great War, is the first to feel their wrath. The rambles remove some of it with a hand-grenade.



3 Heading east, they shoot two cider-swigging farmers before they can say: 'Oi - you townies! Get orf-aargh!' Ever the enterprising atheists, they then hand-grenade the vicarage and finish off the verger as he remonstrates with them.



4 Carefully picking their way across the ramshackle, centuries-old footbridge, they merrily open fire on some disorientated community sculptors looking for Grizedale Forest.

5 Dashing south across the new tarmacadamed highway that caused such a fuss at last year's council meeting, they steal a crate of Fanta, then blow the Forestry Commission souvenir shop to smithereens. The ground is spattered with dismembered fluffy dolphins and legless corduroy badgers. The Chief Warden, attempting to 'talk them down' with the aid of a small rocket-launcher, is killed in the blast.

6 Not content with their contraband fizzy pop, they move north-west, toward the New Age Traveller encampment in the Ikea car park. On arrival they gun down the morris dancers, blow a hole in the fence and help themselves to the flat-packed shelving and mobelfakta-approved occasional tables.

7 Exiting the car-park with a song in their hearts, they head south again, toward the Young Christian Club's annual barbecue. Plucky Benji Braithwaite tries to scare them away with his father's starter pistol, but they pick him off with a bazooka and charge the camp, throwing grenades until the sun is obscured by the clouds of distressed denim.

Another valley visited; another valley destroyed. All in a day's work for the world's least popular rambles' association.



Controls

The controls are exquisitely simple. It's all done with the mouse: clicking the left mouse button makes all your people head for the spot you clicked on; clicking the right mouse button makes them shoot; clicking both mouse buttons together makes them throw a grenade or shoot a bazooka, depending on which you select beforehand.

Moving the mouse cursor to any edge of the screen scrolls the view in that direction.

Weapons

Your squad of highly-strung firearm enthusiasts have a choice of three main weapons. Later in the game, some of the vehicles they capture (the helicopter and the armoured jeep) have guns to shoot people with (in case you were

wondering what they could possibly be for). Some bunkers, which are impervious to your normal weapons, have to be taken out with the giant fixed turrets that fire rockets and shells. **Machine guns:** always available and, rather like the magic purse which always had a coin in the bottom in Enid Blyton's stories, always loaded.

Hand grenades: usually only available when you pick up a crate of them, but sometimes you start a mission with a few, which is handy. **Bazookas:** available in the same way as the grenades, although they're better in that they can shoot across entire screens. Of course, this means that you can also be shot at across whole screens (usually without knowing who's doing the shooting).

As you'd expect, what we're talking about here is scarcely-controlled mayhem. Baddies swarm at you from all sides, throwing grenades, firing guns and spitting. Ideally, you start a level with your handful of men, fight your way through the two or three sub-levels required and then get them all promoted at the end.

Missions never progress as smoothly as all that anyway. For a start, you don't know where everything is when you start a level, so it's more of





Innocent Bystanders

You know what they say: it's always the innocent bystanders who get hurt. It certainly is when I play; I'll walk miles out of my way to pick one off. The problem with innocent bystanders is just that – they stand by, getting in the way when you're fighting for your life. Sometimes they'll be anti-you, which is fine – they shoot at you, you shoot at them, no hard feelings on either side. One lot in the arctic seems to be pro-you as long as you don't harm any of the wildlife. Unfortunately, you risk injury trying not to hurt them, and, however hard you try not to, sooner or later you're going to end up shooting one of them. This will make you about as popular as an advertising salesman. Their relatives will come swarming out of their huts, waving their guns, ready to prove some point or other about loyalty (showing how little they have in common with advertising salesmen), and you'll have to shoot all of them. The moral? It's easier just to shoot them all in the first place so you don't have worry about hitting the wrong person. You can always make a video later to show how accurate your raids were and hold press-conferences explaining that only the baddies got hurt.

an exploratory thing – trial and error. You might get lucky and make it through by sheer luck, and reasonable reflexes. More often, you'll be taken by surprise a couple of times and die, and have to re-start the level. It can get quite tense at times, especially when you're down to your last man in the last mission of a level.

Promotion

Promotion doesn't just mean they get to wear a nicer shirt and use a different toilet; it has very definite advantages. They can throw grenades further, their bullets travel a greater distance and hit targets more accurately. Once this happens, you become over-protective of them to the point where you might even leave them behind at the start of the mission, only going back to them if everyone else dies (which defeats the point of having them in the first place). The highest-ranking man always leads the rest of the troops – they follow him single file; he goes where you tell him.

Variety

There's great variety in the game, and it's nice to see so many different elements working together so well. There are the different areas of warfare for a start – jungle, arctic wastes and desert – and later there are army bases and bunkers to fight your way through. Vehicles also come into it: some levels have jeeps, tanks, helicopters

(Above left) How to lower the tone of a neighbourhood.

(Above right) Caught in the act!

IN PERSPECTIVE

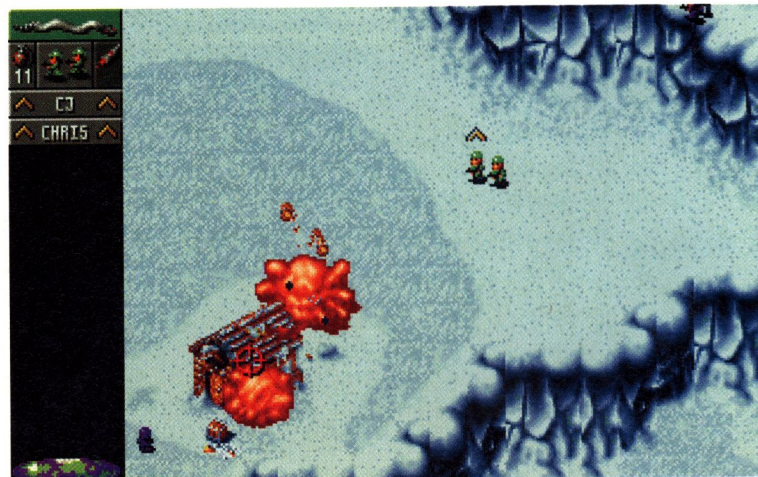
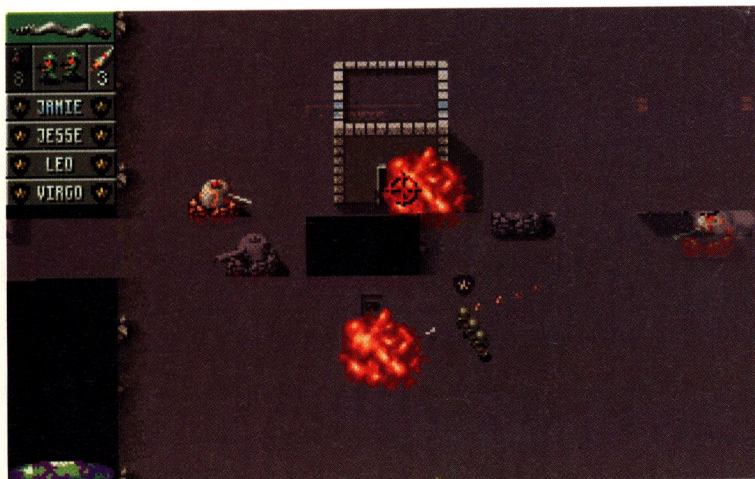
Syndicate is the only really obvious comparison, though it's a tad more serious in aim. *D-Day* has an arcade section that's similar (sorry, I'm clutching at straws here).

Syndicate

Cannon Fodder

D-Day

(Below left and right) Instructions for procedure when caught in the crossfire: blow up everything!



No Hiding Place

Make sure you get those enemy huts, igloos, holes in the ground and bunkers, or enemies will keep pouring out until they manage to kill you. It doesn't matter how wrecked they look, if the door's still intact, they're occupied. Once the door's gone, you know they're no longer in use.

③ That's your squad. Well one of them, anyway. You can create three altogether, by splitting the one you have. Each time you do so, you decide how many of the

special weapons (bazookas, grenades and so on) the new squad will share between them (all, half or none of the total you possess).

② Your bazookas.

③ Your grenades.

④ That's an enemy. Shoot it.

⑤ An enemy hut. Blow it up, quick, or they'll be streaming out of there all day.

⑥ A snowman. Be nice to it. (Only joking.)

⑦ Your map. Click on this to show the whole of the level at once, which makes it easier to see where the nearest pub is.



and skidoos, and the later levels even have fixed gun-turrets. You can capture and use any vehicle (including the turrets) the enemy possesses. There's all sorts of fun to be had just from running people over.

As it's a shoot 'em-up, there are power-ups a-plenty – usually in the form of crates full of fireworks, but occasionally you'll find something rather lovely, like a bullet-proof vest, a missile bonus or an instant-promotion-to-General icon (which is very rare indeed, and a bit of a pisser if you then get the chap killed).

It's a great game. It might seem similar in style to *Syndicate*, but it's considerably faster. Enemies (especially tanks and helicopters) have their own intelligence routines, and make life as hard as possible for you. The difficulty curve is just about perfect: you sweat and sweat over a level until you suss it, then get onto the next one which is a little bit harder. If you die, and have to re-do the previous level, it usually seems fairly easy after all. One of the later levels is called 'Running Out Of Ideas' – and they probably were by then –

but if you make it that far, you'll feel you've had more than your money's worth. **Z**

90

SCORE

Great fun for all the wrong and right reasons.

Minimum Memory: 2Mb

Minimum Processor: 386SX

Hard Disk Space Required: 5Mb

Graphics Modes Support: VGA, SVGA

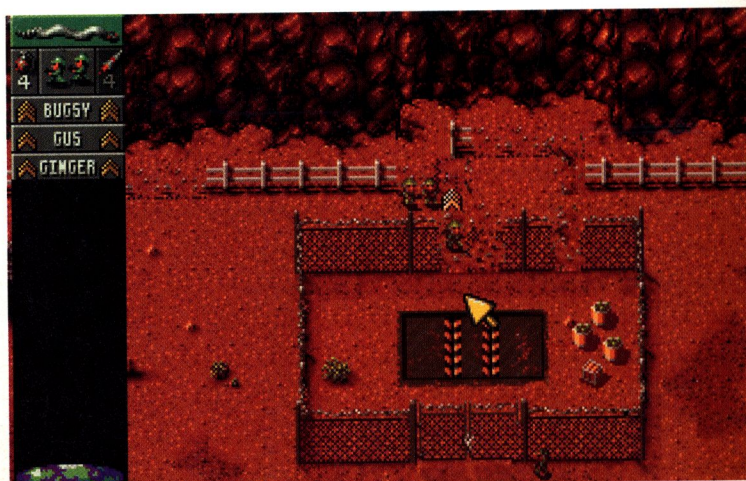
Soundcards Supported: PC Speaker, Roland, Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro

Controls Supported: Mouse

Comments: SVGA support for Tseng cards only

Price: £34.99 **Release Date:** End of April

Publisher: Virgin **Tel:** 081 960 2255



D/GENERATION

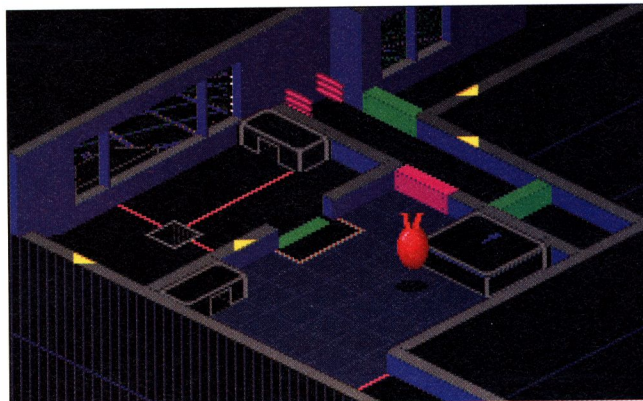
A classic game of the '90s, which coincidentally harks back to the classic games of the '80s, is now set to become a classic game for Windows.

Laurence Scotford tries to explain what on earth he's on about.



WHEN IT FIRST APPEARED a couple of years ago *D/Generation* generated a sigh of relief from just about every game player who came across it. Why?

Because it broke the increasing trend for new games to be spectacular in the audio-



Apparently Derrida has been getting increasingly worked up about the package: your consignment must hold the answer to restoring order to Genoa.

(Top) So far our hero has been having a ball. Now, however, a ball is having our hero. (Middle) Landing on the roof of the Genoa corporation, your adventure is about to begin.



(Bottom) Rescuing people gives you a nice warm feeling inside. Accidentally blowing them away is the usual way things go.

visual departments whilst somewhat lacking in qualities like fun, addictiveness, and accessibility. Instead *D/Generation* as good as ignored all the advanced sound and graphics capabilities of modern PCs and relied entirely for its appeal upon the fact that it was jolly easy to get into and good fun to play.

Blue genes

The plot starts you as a motorcycle courier of the future (well jet-pack courier to be precise). You have arrived at the huge headquarters of the Genoa corporation in Singapore with an urgent package for Professor Derrida, the head scientist of the corporation. When you arrive at the building you discover that the building's security system has gone haywire and that the employees are being menaced by the bizarre genetic creations of Derrida and his team.

'This is a great game, and worth having if you haven't got around to discovering it yet.'



You decide there and then that it is your duty to somehow get the mysterious package to Derrida. To do that you must work your way from floor to floor, securing all the rooms by killing the genetic monsters within them and blocking the vents that they are using to spread themselves throughout the building.

As you make your way through the building you discover survivors. Naturally, being an all round good guy, you feel compelled to help each of them escape, but some of them can be quizzed for useful information beforehand. And you'll need as much information as you can get, because making your way through the building is not only extremely hazardous, it's also mind-bendingly difficult. Certain doors can only be opened with security keys or by entering passwords at computer terminals. Even if you do manage to clear the genetic creatures in each room you still have to solve the fiendish puzzles to progress.

Through the square window...

So, why are we re-reviewing an ageing game? Because Mindscape has chosen to re-release it to run under Windows, that's why. The game opens into a fixed size window, but other than re-sizing you can do everything you can with any other Windows application. The only other change to this new version is that Mindscape has, rather bizarrely, chosen to remove the option for joystick control. I can't fathom that one at all. Even so, this is a great game, and worth having if you haven't got around to discovering it yet. **Z**



SCORE

Probably the best game that Windows users have ever played.

Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Minimum Processor: 386 SX
Hard Disk Space Required: 3.5 Mb
Graphic Modes Supported: VGA, (SVGA)
Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster
Controls: Keyboard
Comments: Requires Windows 3.1 running in enhanced mode.
Price: £19.99 **Release Date:** Out now
Publisher: Mindscape
Telephone: 0444 246333

7

Superb Reasons to join Special Reserve

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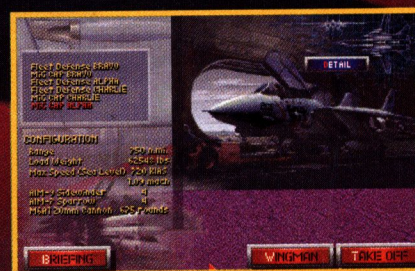
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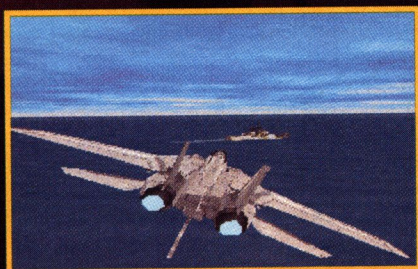
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MERCHANT PRINCE

Mixing avarice with politics

Chris Anderson attempts to become rich, powerful and Pope – all in one game. That's renaissance men for you.



IF IT'S ANOTHER buying, selling, plundering and making lots of money game. If you're not averse to playing around with the odd strategy game or

two, you've probably seen lots like this one.

The first time you play them, you play them for bloody ages until you suddenly realise you've been buying all the wrong stuff and going to all the wrong places. At this point you'll do one of two things: bin it because it's crap, or say to yourself: 'Right, I know exactly what to do now, let's go for it from the top'. It's as simple as that. You'll either end up with a game you'll play to death until you win it, or you'll have a couple of new floppy disks to format.

When I first saw *Merchant Prince* I was almost convinced I would be playing it for a few hours, and thereafter *Merchant* and I would be going our separate ways. As it turned out, despite the dodgy graphics which I felt were almost daring me to play, I waded in and got a lot more than I'd bargained for.

Columbus eat your heart out

Your objective in *Merchant Prince* is to be the richest merchant in Venice by the end of the game. This is not a simple case of buying tons of really cheap stuff and selling it for a massive profit; there are three computer opponents with the same goal who you have to outwit at every turn to win. This involves manipulating the corruption inherent in the church to your own advantage, and so becoming a political power, and spreading your influence throughout the world.

You start *Merchant Prince* with a meagre amount of money and a couple of galleys to use for trade and exploration. To begin with, the world map is blanked out so you need to explore an area before you can see



what's in it. The best approach is to use your small ships to cover as wide an area as possible, and use the large ones with a bigger cargo capacity for trading.

The game is played on a turn basis, with each of your units having a set amount of movement points each turn, so it's important to establish a reasonably lucrative trade route as early in the game as possible and start building up the florins. As is the case with all trading games, the first thing to do is find out what products sell for the most money, discover the



(Above) The Doge's Palace. Full of corrupt politicians hanging about waiting for a decent bribe.

	Attack	Defense
ACCESS	NONE 299	NONE 155
ACCESS	NONE 366	NONE 156
ACCESS	NONE 718	NONE 100
ACCESS	NONE 263	NONE 80
ACCESS	NONE 238	NONE 126
ACCESS	NONE 375	NONE 119
ACCESS	NONE 206	NONE 65
ACCESS	NONE 282	NONE 61
ACCESS	NONE 200	NONE 61
	48/10 PER TURN	

cheapest place to buy them and then locate the places willing to pay the most for them. After that it's a simple matter of buying

lots of ships, loading them up with the goods, and sending them off to earn heaps of dosh.

Once you know where you want your

ships to go and what you want them to trade in, you can automate the routes, so all you have to do is call up the route screen for any of your ships, set the destinations and cargo type, and sit back and watch them follow your orders for each turn. Once you've got a few of these set up, your money will soon start to accumulate. When you've got enough of it, you'll be in a position to start throwing your weight around in the church and political circles. That's when the fun really starts.

(Above) Feeling flush? Spend an absolute fortune on getting some mercenaries to run around beating everybody up.



The Control Interface

- 1 Displays miniature view of the entire playing area.
- 2 Displays active unit type.
- 3 Shows what cargo the active unit is holding.
- 4 Stops active unit. Useful if your ship's approaching a city with pirates.
- 5 Activates the buy/sell screen if the unit is docked.
- 6 Cycles between movement modes. You can tell your unit to take a long, safe route, or a fast, dangerous one.
- 7 Brings you back to the main menu.
- 8 The route button enables you to set trade routes.
- 9 The ledger gives general info on the cities and players.
- 10 The globe brings up the world map and shows unexplored terrain.
- 11 The shovel is used for building roads through mountains and deserts.

A life on the ocean wave

Finding the best trade routes and taking advantage of them will certainly make you a substantial amount of money and get you started in the game, but the real money is in the church and politics. Saint Marc's Basilica is home to the Pope and all the cardinals. The cardinals can be bought and each one you own entitles you to one vote in the papal election. Get enough votes and you can become Pope and make lots of money from your rivals through the sale of cardinalships.



SCORE

Don't let the dodgy graphics fool you. If you give this game half a chance you'll be hooked.

MOVE POINTS

The Doge's palace is the political centre in the game. The Doge is elected by the senate and you can bribe any of the ten most powerful senators to gain their votes so you can run for Doge and take heaps of loot from the treasury.

Much back-stabbing, slandering and murdering is necessary if you want to become Pope or Doge. Senators and cardinals get bumped off left, right and centre as each player hires assassins to attack the officials currently loyal to their rivals. For this reason it's unwise to spend money in the church or Doge's palace until you have enough to buy a large number of cardinals or senators so that you can run for election immediately.

Elections for Pope and Doge take place every ten turns, but if you can't wait you can simply hire a murderer and have the offending Pope or Doge taken out of the equation.

Own up you murdering rotters

The back-stabbing is not confined to the council chambers and Saint Marc's. Each player can hire mercenaries at any time. Some cities deny access to merchants from Venice, and need to be 'persuaded' to change their attitude. Constant attacks from pirates and those unfriendly types from Genoa are another reason to bring in the tough guys. Mercenaries are expensive



(Above) The six modes of transport. Camels are zippy in the desert and donkeys are pretty nifty in the mountains. Ships are, er, just ships really.



(Above left) Saint Marc's. Buy lots of cardinals, become Pope, wear silly hats and wave at everyone.



Minimum Memory: 1Mb
Minimum Processor: 8086/12MHz
Hard Disk Space Required: 4Mb
Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster
Controls: Mouse
Price: £44.99 Release Date: Out now
Publisher: Mirage Telephone: 0260 299909

IN PERSPECTIVE

It's the gameplay in *Merchant Prince* that gives it the edge on the other two games here. The *Patrician* looks better than *Merchant Prince* but isn't. *Napoleon* looks worse and is.

Merchant Prince

The Patrician

Napoleon

EXCELLENT GAMES

Having won *Excellent Games* in the tombola at the Women's Institute, **Chris Anderson** was delighted to find that not all compilations are synonymous with crap...

COMPILATIONS SEEM to be cropping up everywhere these days. Trouble is, software houses tend to use them as an excuse to squeeze the last bit of mileage out of their old titles. Old titles, I might add, that didn't sell very well when they were originally released. The unfortunate result is most compilations offer one decent game together with any number of completely duff ones. So, if you managed to find one with not one, not two,

band of people, flattening land so they can build shelters, creating leaders so they can scrap with your rival's populace, and using Divine Intervention to wreak havoc on his land. *Populous 2* is one of the best examples of this kind of strategy game and, with each world getting progressively harder to win, it should keep any strategy fan happy for a long time to come.

How well you'll get on with *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* really depends on whether or not you like snooker or pool in real life. If you do, you'll like this game. The

graphics are good, the camera views of all the shots are superb, and it has a distinct 'I'll beat that varmint this time if it kills me' quality about it that will keep you playing for hours at a time.

How much?

James Pond 2: Codename Robocod is a better-than-average platform game with great graphics and

sound, and there's nine massive levels of it. The scrolling is particularly smooth, and the joystick response to your fishy character's movements are fast and precise.

If platform games are your thing, you'll have hours of fun with this one.

Car And Driver is all about people sitting in cars and driving

them about, funnily enough. This is the weakest game on offer here. The graphics and sound effects are good enough, but you can only get so much enjoyment out of driving cars around the same race tracks. Its one redeeming feature is you can go to the parking lot and crash into lots of expensive cars when you get bored. Overall, *Excellent Games* represents great value for money, so if you haven't got any of the titles on it already, buy it now and save yourself a heap of cash. **Z**

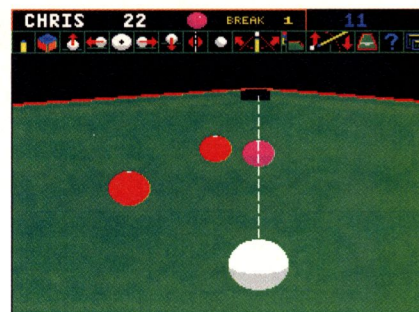


but three brill games on it (and one monumentally average one - you can't have everything I suppose), you'd be shouting: 'Flippin' barg or what?' and pulling out your readies in a flash, wouldn't you? Well, shake the dust off the old wallets mateys because it is with great pleasure I announce the arrival of... (sound of trumpets going berserk in background) *Excellent Games*!

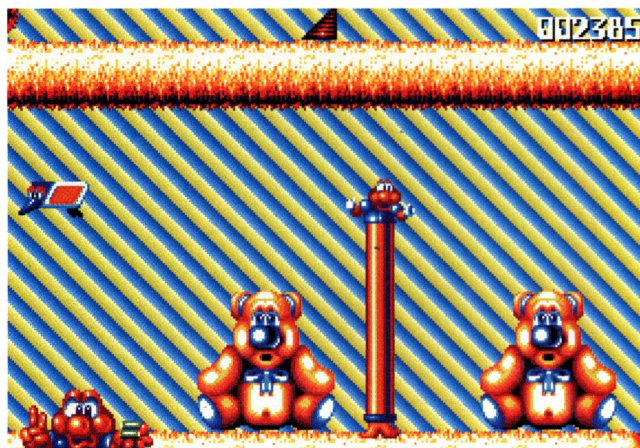
That'll do for me mate

Populous 2 is, to my mind at least, the best 'let's play God' game around at the moment. The original game was excellent and the sequel is even better, with major improvements in the graphics department and a host of new options. Your objective in the game is to defeat a rival God on each world by developing your initially small

'Overall, Excellent Games represents great value for money, so buy it now.'



(Right) Always ready to take on the difficult shots, that's me.



SCORE

Great games at a great price. A compilation definately not to be missed.

(Middle right) James Pond proves he can be flexible in Robocod. (Above left) Play God and order lots of little people around in Populous 2. (Above right) Sod the race tracks, let's play dodgems in the parking lot.

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 386/16MHz
Hard Disk Space Required: 9Mb
Graphics Modes Supported: VGA, (SVGA)
Soundcards Supported: Roland, Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib
Controls: Mouse, Joystick, keyboard
Price: £39.99 **Release Date:** Out now
Publisher: Beau Jolly **Telephone:** 0737 222003

AWARD WINNERS

GOLD EDITION

Oh my God! *Sensible Soccer*, *Elite Plus*, *Zool* and *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* all in the same box. **Chris Anderson** revels in this veritable feast of games.

HAVING ALREADY raved about how good the *Excellent Games* compilation is compared to all the crap comps already on sale, I was a little surprised when the editor handed me another one which is even better.

Software houses seem to have finally wised up to the fact that no-one wants to buy a collection of rubbishy titles – no matter how many of them they stick in the box. Consequently, they are all zooming around trying to snap up all the best games in a desperate effort to out-compile each other. This is great news for PC gamers. If the trend continues and compilations of this quality turn up frequently, the question to ask yourself will no longer be which new game you should spend your hard-earned cash on, but which new compilation?

Fabulous footie

The line-up for *Award Winners* is quite stunning. There isn't a single game here which would not score at least 80 in its own right. First up is *Sensible Soccer*, which may not be up for any awards in the graphics department, but is still the most playable footie sim you'll find on the PC. The passing is smooth and fast, the sound effects are excellent and it has oodles of design options, from editing all the teams to designing your own tournaments. If you like football, you'll love *Sensible Soccer*.

Excellent Elite

Elite Plus is an updated version of the classic space trading and combat game, and is still an engrossing and addictive experience despite the fact it has now been superseded by its own sequel, *Frontier: Elite 2*.

Gameplay consists of buying and selling merchandise for profit, fighting with anybody who pisses you off, and generally getting completely lost in the whole affair as you navigate through eight galaxies consisting of 2,000 planets. Ensure you have time on your hands before sitting down in front of this one, because once you've developed a taste for *Elite* you won't want to do anything else for a long time.

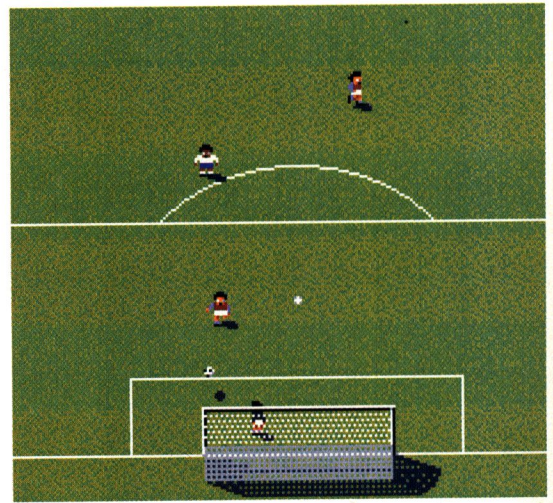
Perfect platformer

Zool is simply the fastest, smoothest, biggest, most awesome piece of platform game action ever to appear on a PC. The music's brilliant, the graphics are colourful and exciting, hidden bonuses are lying about all over the place and the gameplay is fast and furious. Fiendishly clever puzzles perfectly complement the non-stop arcade action, and the game is full of neat little touches

and surprises. As platform games go, *Zool* is the closest thing to perfection you're likely to find.

Smart snooker

It says something for the quality of the other titles in this compilation that *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* is the weakest offering of the bunch. It's still a perfectly acceptable snooker sim, with multiple camera angles to help you fine-tune your shots, fairly decent 3D graphics and enough player-definable options to keep snooker fans knob-twiddling for ages. Frankly, for 35 quid you simply cannot go wrong with *Award Winners*. **Z**



SCORE

Superb quality games with unrivalled value for money. Buy it now!

(Top) If all else fails in *Sensible Soccer*, just run like mad and boot it as hard as you can.
(Middle) Classic space trading and combat with *Elite Plus*.
(Bottom) Even I can't miss this one.

Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 386/16MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 1.9Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA (SVGA)

Soundcards Supported: Roland, Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib

Controls: Joystick, keyboard

Comments: High density floppy drive needed for key disk

Price: £34.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Empire Software

Telephone: 081 343 7337

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER FOR WINDOWS

Just as **Paul Lakin** finally managed to guide Cambridge United to the top of the Premier Division, (albeit for one week only) in came *Championship Manager For Windows*, meaning he had to start all over again.



OME GAMES are designed as Windows versions, some games grow into Windows versions and some games have Windows versions thrust

upon them. The prospect of a Windows version of *Championship Manager* was exciting because it could almost fit into the first category and certainly seemed an ideal game to grow into a Windows version. The whole structure of the original *Championship Manager* is almost that of a Windows product, one of its strengths is the manner in which you can flick from one screen to the next without continually going back to a central menu. *Premier Challenge* showed what could be done with a Windows based management game. Plenty there for *Championship Manager* to learn from.

Shame then that the lessons went unlearned. This is not a Windows game in any way except that it runs in Windows. Which obviously means it is a Windows game. However all this boils down to is that you load it through Windows and can leave it running while you get on with working on other utilities. The benefits of this for a game like CM are twofold. Firstly it's exactly the sort of game that it's great to dip into

every now and again without having to go through the hassle of loading it up every time and secondly any game that can be hidden behind a spreadsheet at a moments notice can't be all bad. So it's boss sensitive. It's mouse sensitive too. Rather too often I found myself clicking out of the game when I didn't want to.

Now, obviously, this is partly due to my hand/eye co-ordination having stopped evolving somewhere around the Triassic period, but it's not helped by the screens in this version being in a fixed size Window. The only other obvious change is the speed which is a tad slower. Not seriously enough to materially affect the playing of the game, but on a 486/33 there was a slight pause between the implementation of tactical changes. No more than an electronic catching of breath but still slightly irritating.

Let's put this in perspective. *Championship Manager* is one of the best football management games. It hasn't suddenly gone crap just because of its conversion to Windows. However it is disappointing that there's been no attempt to exploit the opportunity and really make use of the Windows system. Having finished the review I went straight back to playing the DOS version. **Z**



Minimum Memory: 600k

Minimum Processor: 386

Hard Disk Space Required: 2Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Soundcards Supported: Ad Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland.

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse recommended.

Price: £29.99 Release Date: Out Now

Publisher: Domark Tel: 081 780 2222

Ah, another Third Division mid table thriller

FIRST AMONG EQUALS

If you know all about *Championship Manager* then ignore this box. If however you're new to the world of football management here's a brief summary. CM is one of the best of the football management games, it allows you to manage any team in the football league, buy and sell players, select playing styles and formations and generally do all you can to guide your club to league and cup success. Despite a few lapses (including the size of the leagues and the placing of some teams) club and league details are accurate to the beginning of the 93/94 season, from then on matters are in the hands of you and the game's AI.

Actual matches are displayed as bar graphs, demonstrating the relative performance of the defence, midfield and attack while individual players performance can be accessed through a stats screen. It's very addictive, though unrealistically easy.

'The structure of the original is almost that of a Windows product.'



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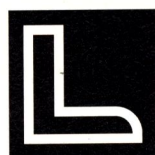
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Another American football game; another review for Patrick McCarthy, the only man in the office who knows a tight end has nothing to do with lycra underwear or step aerobics.



LIKE TOM LANDRY *Strategic Football* (reviewed in issue four), *NFL Pro League Football* is a management game. In other words,

you're the coach, calling the plays, and someone else is out there getting sweaty – although if you're as fat as most coaches, you'll probably be pretty sweaty yourself, too.

It allows for one or two-player games, with two-player games playable either on the same machine or via a modem link-up. To prevent your opponent cheating, it comes with some handy play cards on which the offensive and defensive plays are written, allowing you to call plays without having them appear on-screen. Games can be one-off exhibition matches, or whole seasons can be played with any of the large number of teams included. Weather can also be random, computer-controlled, or chosen by you. It's pretty stupid, though – we managed to get 70 degrees and snow.

Teams

There are several teams available for each 'franchise': for example, Redskins fans will be pleased to know that they're not lumbered with this year's team, but can select the 1991 Superbowl winners; Giants fans can pick the 1990 team, and Bills fans can pick any team they want really – they'll still lose the Superbowl.

Plays

The point of the game, of course, is play-calling. As such, you'd expect a hefty selection of plays to be available, and there

are certainly plenty. The problem is that the plays available are all single-option stuff. Passing plays only designate one receiver however many are on the field, which is pretty weak. No real-life coach designs a passing play with three wide receivers on the field in which only one receiver is planned to catch the ball – the quarterback is always given as many options as possible.

The major part of a coaching game – and virtually the only source of enjoyment, given that you can't execute the plays yourself – is inventing your own plays and putting together your own playbook. This game doesn't have anything like the complexity of *Front Page Sports Football Pro*, which even allows for actions before and after the snap, and has almost infinite capabilities for making up any kind of play you want – sophisticated, bizarre or just plain stupid. Considering this game doesn't have the added arcade elements of *Front Page Sports Football Pro*, its appeal is somewhat lessened. Where the game is good is in its league-creation facilities.

Half a league, half a league...

It's possible to make up any league of your own choosing, and you're free to decide how many teams, divisions and conferences there will be. The teams to make up the league can be selected in a variety of ways. You can use all the teams from a single season, or mix up any combination of teams from various seasons; you could make one up with all the divisional champions from the last two years, or all the teams who won less than five games and have a loser's championship, or whatever you want.

The nightmare bit when making up your own league is the fixtures schedule. There's an automatic creator that will do an NFL-style list for you, but I made a league of two divisions of four teams, and thought I'd make up the fixtures myself. The good news is it's a very flexible system which can be created, fiddled with, and generally altered at will; the bad news is that creating a ten week season by hand needs the patience of an assistant to Bridget Riley.

A bit of a draft

You can also create teams from scratch using the Draft facilities and incorporate them into leagues with real teams. You can have a college draft (in which professional teams trawl through the ranks of college players to see if any of them have both their knees left), or there's the fantasy-style draft from the professional teams. Both can have strict spending limits imposed for extra authenticity.

(Above) Depressed by the failure of their strategic play to excite the fans, the players decide instead to entertain them with some Morris Dancing.



NFL PRO LE



You decide the teams taking part and the teams they can pick from, and everyone then takes turns picking a 45-man squad. You can make every choice for every team yourself if you're particularly obsessive, which, if you start now, should see you finish just in time for next season. Information on-screen shows the number of individuals available for each position, and the computer can be used to recommend players or pick the teams you're not interested in. This isn't a good idea if you want to create a super-team, because the computer nicks all the players you want.

A good feature is that, once you've finished the drafts, you can save the newly-created teams under team names with the suffix 95-99. These teams then appear as selectable teams back in the initial game options, and can be used in the same way as the proper teams (even to take part in another draft). Pretty nifty, and ideal for

the power-crazy: you could set up a league draft just to create your own personal dream team, save it as a proper team and use it to give all the real teams a really good hammering.

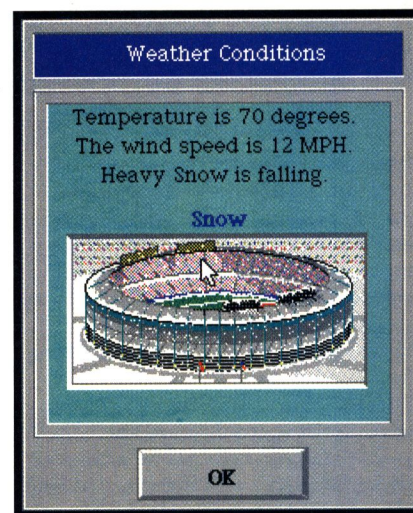
The non-beautiful game

The game itself is played in one of two ways: you either see the play animated before your very eyes, or simply see the results. The animation won't set the Disney studios fretting. The leg action of the offensive linemen had passers-by in hysterics. They look disturbingly like Max Wall doing a sand-dance; the receivers and backs look like a modern dance troupe doing a socially-satirical 'running' bit from a hard-hitting new performance piece, and the whole thing moves with the speed of Tug from *Home And Away's* brain patterns. But the alternative, the instant result, makes you feel as if you're being cheated, especially as the computer doesn't go into

any kind of 'hmm, hold on a second, I'm just permutating the ramifications of your play-selections based on...' mode.

Worst of all, defensive intelligence isn't what it should be; when your opponent runs a sweep to the right, it's frustrating to see your left cornerback racing away downfield, stuck to the opposing wide receiver like a Siamese twin, instead of turning round to make the tackle.

And let's face it, just calling the plays all the time gets boring after a while. Sooner or later you want to get in there and do a little better yourself. As it is, the only way to spice the game up is to use the custom play option to make up plays as you go along, with the clock running. The limited options available mean that you end up producing plays that are virtually identical to the ones already there, but at least



there's the thrilling race against time to enhance your existence.

Another management game

The arrival of this game, so soon after we've spent so many billions of person-hours ploughing through a wide array of proper football management games, highlights the difference in standards involved. In part it's to do with expectations, and in part with the types of sport involved.

As far as expectations go, a lot of Americans spend a lot of time playing fantasy simulations of baseball and American football management. They've been doing it for years, with games based on complicated statistical systems which the upstart computer game has to be very good to rival, especially if it's going to win

'The whole thing moves with the speed of Tug from Home And Away's brain patterns.'

AGUE FOOTBALL



round personality types who care far more about statistical accuracy than they do about pictures of fancy helmets and grunting samples. Football fans, on the other hand, have had to make do (until very recently) with rather uninspired imitations of football on computer, and the fantasy leagues that have recently experienced such a boom in popularity are - let's face it - pretty simplistic.

It has a lot to do with the difference in the respective sports. Baseball and American football both revolve around a series of set-piece confrontations that lend themselves to being categorised statistically, but soccer is free-flowing and you tend to be dealing in abstracts. So, whereas an American football management game will have a statistic at its disposal - the actual number of rushing yards a player averaged per attempt - a soccer management game will have a player with running speed and passing rating based on more-or-less informed opinions.

As a manager in an American sport you deal with hard facts, and are involved from moment to moment. Effects of management decisions are seen instantly: you call a run up the middle on third-and-one and you either gain the first down or get stopped; or you order a sacrifice fly with a runner on third base and the runner will either score on the throw or not. As a soccer manager, on the other hand, you make decisions based on general principles and intangibles, set up your team as best you can, and from then on it's more or less out of your hands. This makes it easier to produce a satisfying simulation of baseball or American football than to produce a decent football game.

The point of all this wittering is that if you look at this game as a management game in competition with football management games, it has features that make it stand out, generally in the league and team creation department. But if you look at it as an American football

management game, there are better games around - *Front Page Sports Football* being the obvious choice - even though the management side is not the whole reason for their existence, as it is with *NFL Pro League Football*. If this was a soccer management game, the amount of teams available and the league customisation and team-creation facilities would be unique. But that's the problem - all you really need after that to make a halfway decent American footy game is to have access to accurate statistics, and know enough about the game to incorporate plenty of pre-defined plays.

Ultimately, *NFL Pro League Football* is aimed at a very particular market, which is almost exclusively American, and unfortunately, even in terms of its playbook and play-creation facilities, it doesn't

match the standards of *Front Page Sports Football* or *Coaches Club Football*. **Z**



Minimum Memory: 4Mb RAM (3Mb XMS essential)

Minimum Processor: 286 16MHz (386 33MHz recommended)

Hard Disk Space Required: 9Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

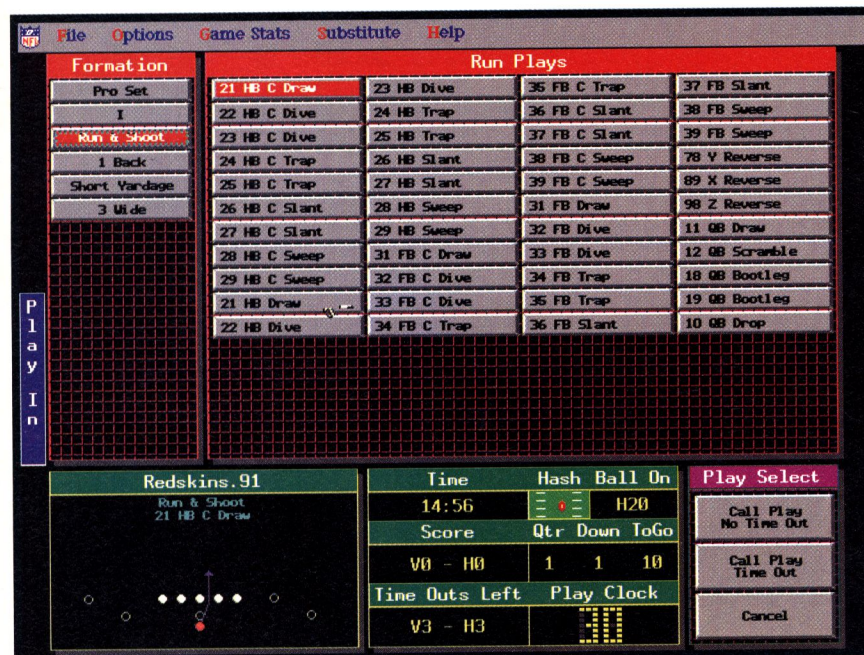
Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: DOS 5.0 or above required; Hayes-compatible modems supported; 132-column printers supported

Price: £39.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Digital Integration **Tel:** 0276 684959



IN PERSPECTIVE

NFL Pro League Football is certainly not the best of the bunch. This title still belongs to *Front Page Sports Football*.

Coaches' Club Football

Front Page Sports

NFL Pro League

Tom Landry

(Top) American Football is a serious, strategic game, not for those who find terms like Flare, Streak or Drag even slightly amusing. (Left) Notice the bootleg option, presumably favoured by the Pirates.

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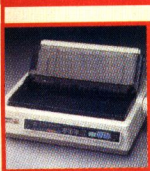
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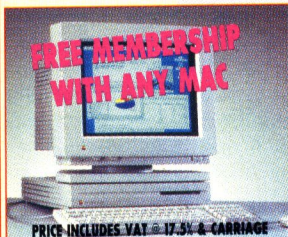


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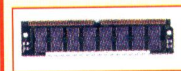
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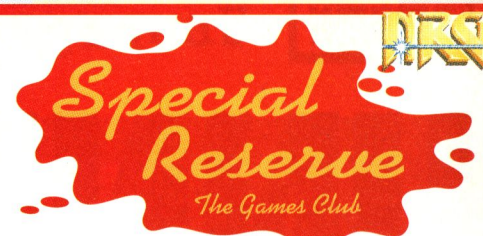
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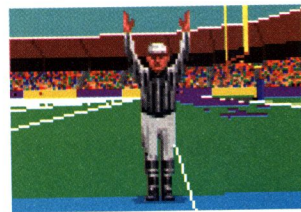
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UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS



Andy Clerkson has always had a problem with inappropriate responses to bodily contact. We gave him *Unnecessary Roughness* to review in the hope that it would knock it out of him.



AMERICAN FOOTBALL. The ever vacuous Nicky Horne brought it to our TV screens on wintry Sunday nights back in the early '80s and with only a few cosmetic changes (unlucky Nicky), it has stuck around for over 10 years. Now the nicknames Redskins and 49ers are as much ingrained on the minds of UK sports fans as the Gunners and Canaries. And American Football simulations are much the same as the real thing.

They arrived a long while back with

tubby John Madden, stuck to gamers like *Ultimas*, and now could fill a monthly magazine on their own. So as you are taking time to flick

through *American Football Zone*, I'll delve into the latest 'hut, hut, hut' offering from Accolade, *Unnecessary Roughness*.

Stat attack

Unnecessary Roughness combines excellent statistic-laden coaching options with gruelling arcade action similar to Joe Montana and Mike Ditka's namesake sims and the current benchmark, *Front Page Sports*. Accolade has supplied a myriad of playing options from the 'total coach' (you define plays and let the action unfold), to the 'total footballer' (you allow the computer to do the brain power and just follow orders), or a combination of both: the most sensible and enjoyable option. You don't even have to play the game at all with the full season simulation, which calculates the scores of all games in your league in about the time it takes a small

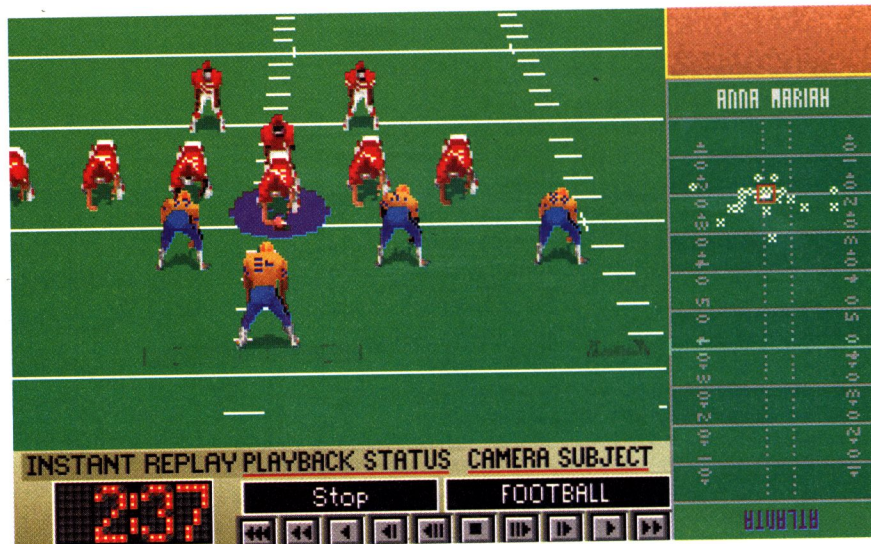
snail to tow a caravan round the M25. The simulator also calculates the scores on a week-by-week basis, so you can pick and choose which games to play and bypass the boring ones like the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Talking of names, Accolade hasn't been sanctioned to use the

NFL team nicknames and logos. Although all the players from last season are in here, each team takes just the city name and a rather dodgy (non-NFL) logo. But it's all fruitless anyway as saddoes spend the first hour of gameplay editing all team names to their NFL monikers and terminal saddoes spend this time dreaming up the Green Bay Slackers and Buffalo Dills and the like. The

logos can also be drawn, allowing you to create a giant dill pickle for the Buffalo squad, although the graphic capabilities of the logo editor are on a par with Etch-a-Sketch.

All good football sims rely on a healthy play and team editor and Accolade has stuffed *Unnecessary Roughness* with both. You can play a full season or the usual one-off exhibition game, and can customise players and teams, setting up

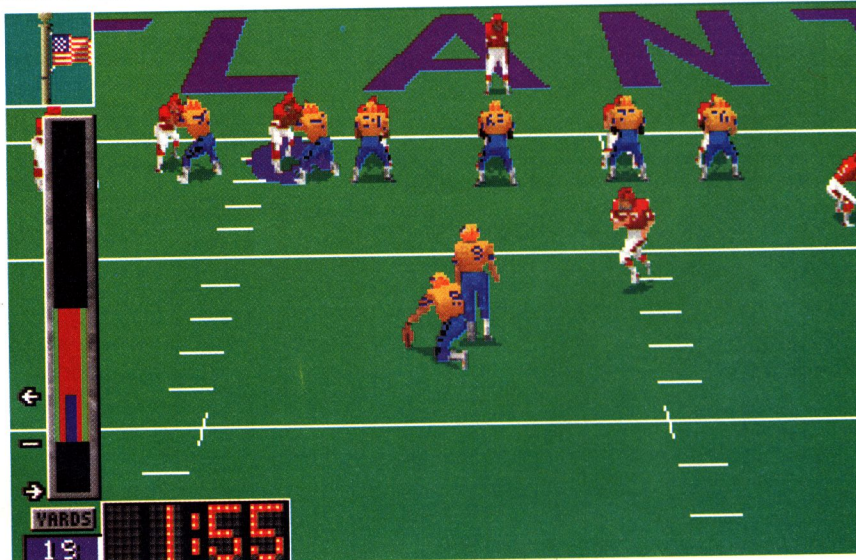


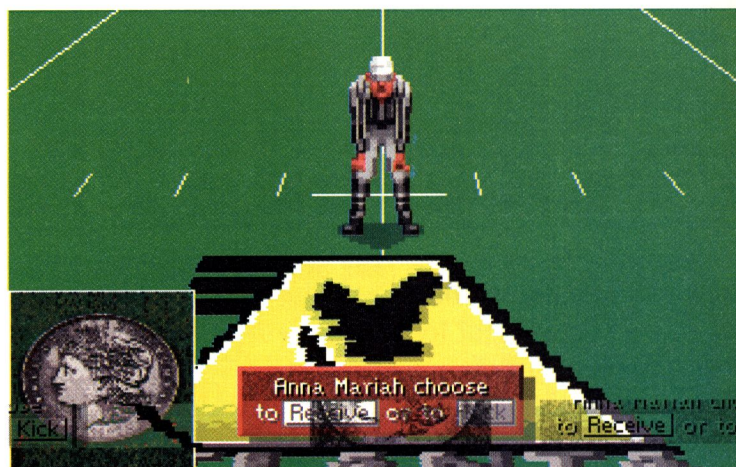
(Above) Using the keyboard, you won't need instant replays as the screen redraw slows you to a standstill.

(Below) Sadly the myriad options ignore kicking with no shoes - which is my style.

your own leagues, choosing strips (everything from emblems on hats to the stripes on trousers). The team editor is comprehensive allowing you to give players inhuman strengths, and a notable 80 plays are programmed in with options to change these subtly or create entirely new plays.

Unnecessary Roughness includes one of the best play editors of all American football games with the ability to change the priorities and routes of every single player/position in a play. The point and click interface for editing plays is a doddle



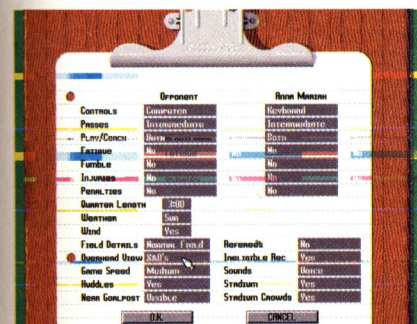


to use and makes all the difference for enticing inexperienced players into the editing side of the game. All the

plays you create, whether they be inspired or downright idiotic, can be saved into any number of playbooks. These contain up to 30 plays and, usefully, display six plays at a time to save on excessive page turning.

Play the game

As all American sports fans bow down to Statisticus, The Great God Of Number Crunching, these editing features are crucial to extending the life of the game and at the same time destroying your own life, as you will spend months fiddling with the minutiae of your teams stats.



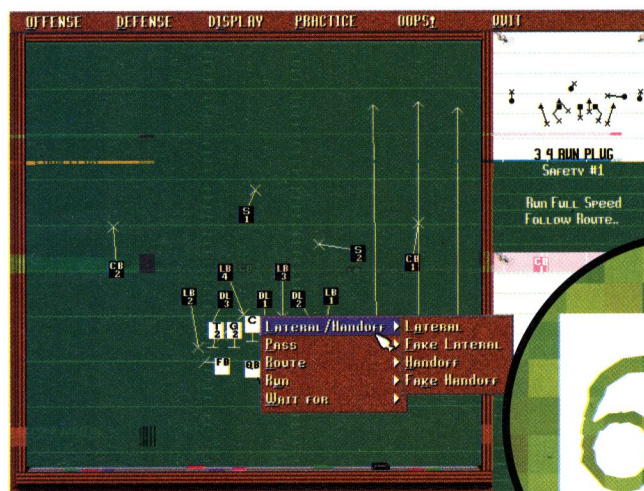
Far more socially rewarding is the arcade action bit with which you can buy some company by inviting in someone off the street for a spot of two-player *Unnecessary Roughness*. Unfortunately, you're going to have to work hard to keep them there. The graphics and gameplay are solid, if not inspired. The sprites are small and not particularly well animated (not up to *Front Page Sports* standard). The ball is passed by switching views to highlight a pre-ordained series of receivers. These receivers do not appear in windows, but in full screen, and, unless you have the game map up which runs down a quarter of the screen, it is difficult to judge where on the field they are in relation to your Quarterback. Still, many games use this type of passing method, so there isn't much alternative, although the target cursor approach used in *Coaches Club Football* and *John Madden* is

'Unnecessary Roughness is a worthy addition to the American Football lorry load.'

far superior, giving you more control.

While I'm on the subject, the controls are a serious danger to your mental

health. The keyboard is a fine passer of the ball, but makes an awful sound when you keep the keys used for running depressed for more than a couple of seconds. The mouse, on the other hand, can move you around the field smoothly, if unpredictably, but passing is a headache. A joystick is probably the best option, but the one I tried lost all calibration and try as I might I couldn't get the game to work sensibly with it.



Unnecessary griping

Despite my incessant moaning, average arcade action mixed with excellent editing facilities make *Unnecessary Roughness* a worthy addition to the American football lorry load. The only *Unnecessary Roughness* in this whole saga, however, is aimed at those with anything less than a 486DX/33. Apparently, this is the minimum hardware required to run the game and, judging from my experience on a lower spec machine (the screen redraws every few seconds while running down field), this is no joke. So if you are still without a Pentium and own a 386, you can forget it and put it down to *Unnecessary Daftness* on the part of the programmers. ☒

(Above left) Paint your own Miro-esque logo. (Above right) Until you get used to the controls the coin toss is your only moment of glory.

(Below) Tweak 'til you squeak and create the most pathetic play in history.

IN PERSPECTIVE

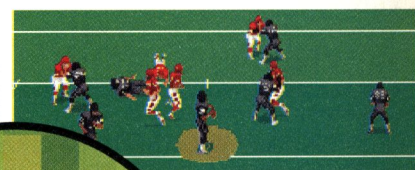
It's a good few points behind *Front Page Sports Football* in terms of graphics and gameplay, but has equal standing with the best of the rest.

Front Page Sports

NFL Coaches Club

Unnecessary Roughness

John Madden



66

SCORE

Best described as 'alright' it's as good as most American Footy sims.

Minimum Memory: 4Mb

Minimum Processor: 386/33MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 8Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA, SVGA

Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold, Windows Sound Systems, Pro Audio Spectrum, Sound Blaster, General Midi, PC Speaker

Controls: Joystick, mouse, keyboard

Comments: 486/50MHz, 8Mb recommended

Price: £39.99 Release Date: Out now

Published: Accolade Telephone: 081 877 0880

(Left) The all-important coaches clipboard - unfortunately you don't get a puffer jacket and ridiculous telephonist's headset.

AIRLINES

Unable to find any airline offering a return flight to New York for a fiver **Chris Anderson** decided he'd spotted a gap in the market and launched himself into *Airlines*. We'll he do a Laker or make a Branson of himself?



HIS IS ALMOST AN exact replica of a game called *Airbucks*. It has been written by a different software house, it comes in a different box, but at the end of the day it's still all about buying aeroplanes and trying to make heaps of cash out of them.

No marks for originality then, and certainly no marks for the woeful graphics and complete lack of sound support. So, if *Airlines* is going to impress anyone it will just have to be in terms of good, old-

'Setting the route was easy-peasy, setting a ticket price was a bloody nightmare.'

fashioned playability. I have heard tell of games that look completely crap, sound completely crap (or don't sound at all as is the case here), but turn out to be utterly brilliant to play. I haven't come across any of them myself, mind, but I'm just as willing to shout 'looks aren't everything you know' as the next person. So for the duration of this review I shall remain completely open-minded and go searching for the riot of gameplay that no doubt lies hidden beneath *Airlines'* unspeakably unattractive exterior.

Shady business

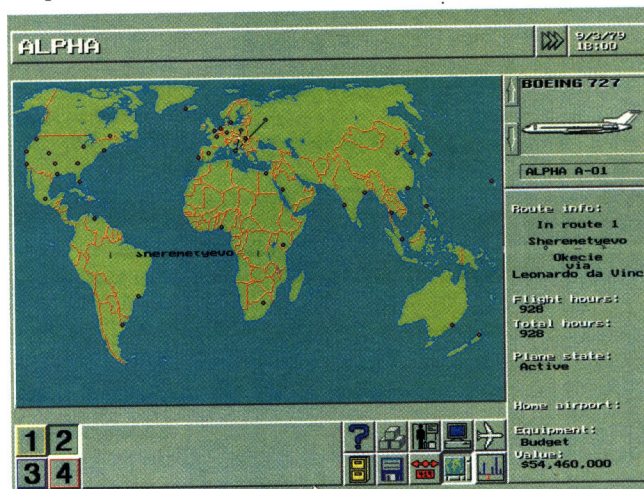
The game starts in 1970 with only a few planes to choose from. The Boeing 747 looked like being the best bet, so I thought I'd go for one of those. I soon discovered I couldn't afford one without selling bundles of my company shares (not a great idea on the first day of a new business). This in itself did not bother me too much (there were other planes to buy after all). What did piss me off, though, was that all three of my computer opponents had bought Boeings immediately after the game had started and had not sold any of their shares or assets.

Where on earth did they get the money from? According to the manual we all started the game with the same amount of

money: 50 thousand dollars. Boeings cost 58 thousand dollars, so where did they get the extra cash? How come they've got one and I haven't? Why is life so unfair? etc. After giving the situation some thought, I decided not to sell any of my shares and go for a Tupolev instead and not worry about what my competitors (jammy buggers) had or hadn't got.

The price is right?

And so it was I marched off with my lowly Tupolev (hmmph!) and set about giving it a route. Nothing too ambitious to start off with, a nice little trip from London to Paris would probably do the job. Setting the route was easy-peasy, but setting a ticket price was a sheer bloody nightmare. You have to guess what ticket prices will attract the punters, and considering the game

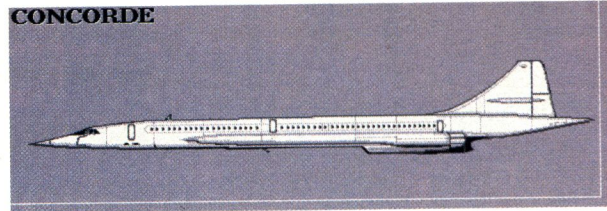


starts in 1970 this is no easy task. The only way to work it out is by starting with your price really low and working your way up by an extra pound each time until you get it right, all the time flitting backwards and forwards to the info screen to see if any people are using your plane. This is made even more difficult by the fact you aren't allowed to see what prices your competitors are charging (now, how realistic is that, I ask you?).

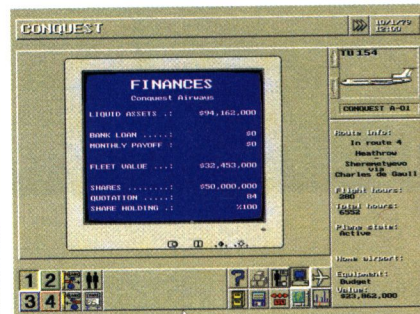
After I'd finished faffing about with the pricing and found a couple of lucrative routes, I took a quick peek at the tacky performance graph to see how I was doing. It turned out that I was miles ahead of my rivals, so I just sat back, had a quick look at the graph every now and then and fast forwarded the months until the game was over and I'd won.

So, in the end, all I found beneath *Airlines'* less than attractive exterior was an hour of pissing around with ticket prices and a couple more hours of totally boring non-gameplay. ☹

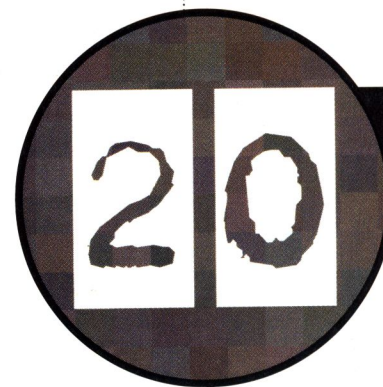
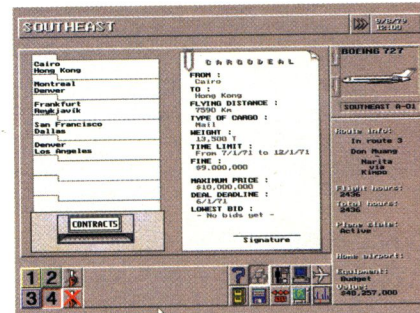
CONCORDE



(Above) Concorde. You may as well get a good look at it while you can because you'll never be able to afford it. (Right) The finance screen. Once you've got a lucrative route you can just stare at this and wait for the game to end.



(Right) Make extra money by delivering mail to Hong Kong. Exciting, eh?



SCORE

Ugly, fiddly and totally boring.

(Above left) The main options screen. Who, exactly, would want to sit in front of this for three hours? (Above right) At least it's got some colour in it.

Minimum Memory: 1Mb

Minimum Processor: 286/12MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 800K

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA (SVGA)

Soundcards Supported: None

Controls: Mouse

Price: £39.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Kompart **Telephone:** 0727 868005

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THE RED CRYSTAL

For a game like *Red Crystal*, with its two-player option, we needed someone who has played RPGs and has had a friend. Only **Sheldon May** fitted this seemingly impossible profile.



WHY IS IT THAT more than any other genre, RPGs positively scream: 'Bugger the manual; just swing that broadsword'. Having experienced serious

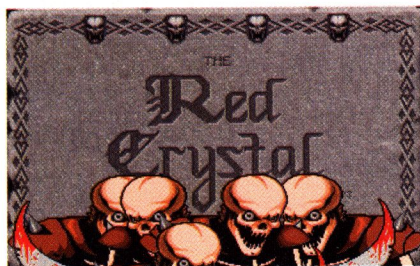
withdrawal symptoms whilst suppressing these aggressive urges since Christmas, and weaning myself off the RPG treadmill, nightmare visions of regression loomed ominously when offered QQR's latest mosh! Yet more evidence that Gary Gyax is the root cause of acute insomnia throughout small groups of our generation. Yep! random dice-rolling for character stats and more barbarians, thieves and sorcerers than you can wave a stick at. All searching frantically for red crystals and the seven secrets of life.

Bish bash bosh

This is one game where knowing the value of one broadsword in your hand and a few more strategically hidden on your person is vital. So much so it actually becomes one of the major failings of the game in that interaction with other non-player

characters is just not on the cards. Your choices of action when meeting another being are restricted to either bribing or fighting. The former is simply a case of selecting from five pre-set amounts of 'zetos' to offer the counterpart. (A nice change from credits or gold I guess).

A rather poorly-produced and confusing manual claims that the combat system is unique because of the necessity to select the height of opponents. Not even remotely true methinks; in fact, the only unique part is the overhead bash move, the results of which are flashed up on the status bar: 'You hit for X points'.



Magic is equally simplistic (apart from the necessity to learn/buy spells from mages) and the results in combat are only marginally more impressive. Your character's stamina improves with each level progression, and these level progressions are gained - need I say this - by smiting just about everything that doesn't stand still.

The game's main feature is the two-player mode, and as such the screen has been split in two leaving a very small arena in which to do battle. Strangely this does not alter in one-player mode in which the second half of the screen is left displaying a small-scale area map. The appearance of your hero depends on your selection at character generation, and the characters are nicely animated and move smoothly whether using the keyboard or mouse.

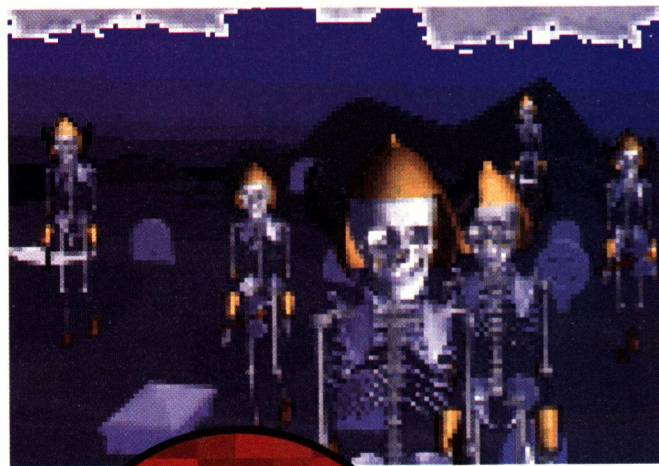
The sectional view employed when in battle is fine but, with eight different directions in which you can face, lining up attacks can be annoying. The unrelenting stream of assailants really begins to stress you out after a while, not because of difficulty, but due to the fact that no

matter how many times you clear a level, when you return there will be more to fight. Okay, you might have missed a few in your haste, or some may

be flitting from one floor to another, but every time you pass through, a new batch of opponents appears, looking spookily like the one's you killed ten minutes ago. Even the most ardent combatants would get bored with this.

Anyone for tennis

This game, I am assured, has the capability of catering for two players either by modem or sitting side-by-side on the same



SCORE

Don't ask your friends to play this if you want to keep them.

(Above) Oh no! I've been rumbled, my new overhead bash move won't work against those helmets.

Minimum Memory: 1Mb

Minimum Processor: 8086

Hard Disk Space Required: 4.5Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster

Controls: Microsoft-compatible mouse

Comments: Supports modem play. Extra hard disk space required for intro

Price: £44.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Mirage **Tel:** 0260 299909

PC - one using the keyboard and the other the mouse. With this in mind, and a six pack in my fridge, myself and A. N. Other sat down to play. Unfortunately, our enthusiasm was short-lived. Our first discovery was that when moving around on the main map the sword icons representing your characters moved erratically; whichever player pressed the cursor key or left mouse button first gained control of

(Below) No messing in this game once the skellies kill you, there is complementary dismemberment. Just to make sure.





the processor, therefore he who was not so nimble-fingered would be left stranded and moving painstakingly slowly.

Having traversed the keyboard six times, I could not locate the correct key for giving either player access to the small-scale map mentioned earlier. Suggestions please QQP. But what really got my goat was that, in the event of either player popping their clogs, the game ended – no closing sequence or gloating text about failing your quest. Not even a 'better luck next time' message. My PC crashed and required a hard boot before signs of life returned. Not content with my appraisal so far it was round to a friend's ninja 486 to ensure it was not just a compatibility problem with my machine. It wasn't – we had the same results. This game was beginning to put out some really bad karma.

Mapped out or stressed out

The auto-mapping facility works well as long as you stay on the same level in the castles, but if you go up or down and then return, your map disappears. You either need to spend a red crystal (purchased from the mages in town) which automatically remaps the level, or wander around again. There seemed no purpose to this except to infuriate players and drain them of 'zetos'.

When on the main map you can choose to enter the castles or a nearby town. All the towns can be bought and tax revenue received from them; and the interactions

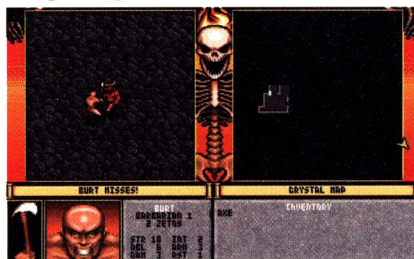
with other inhabitants can lead you off on a quest, but again you will become totally fed up with the same bounty hunters, druids and merchants stopping you and saying the same things. Weapons and equipment can be bought from merchants and healing can be done at the temples.

Is it worth a bigger overdraft?

Even though at no point in the one-player game did it crash, and as yet I have not seen the results of modem play, in my opinion even dated or budget RPGs can offer more of just about everything. The game does have some nice knobs and bells – like the range of portraits for your character and the idea of two players together side by side slogging it out with the same foes – but on the down side the manual is poorly planned out, the limited scope of fight or bribe is positively prehistoric, and the repetition reaches new depths of well... repetitiveness. Numerous bugs aside, the execution doesn't bear a mention, simply because it doesn't deserve one. **Z**



(Above and below) Notice anything different about the Minotaur's suntan? It's the same one, honest. (Bottom right) The split screen that stays split, even in one-player mode. A waste of useful space, but this might explain the rapid frame-update and fluid movement in combat, in an otherwise poorly-executed game.



IN PERSPECTIVE

Because it's the first real two-player RPG it has no competitors on that front. The comparisons below are therefore based on its status as a one-player RPG.

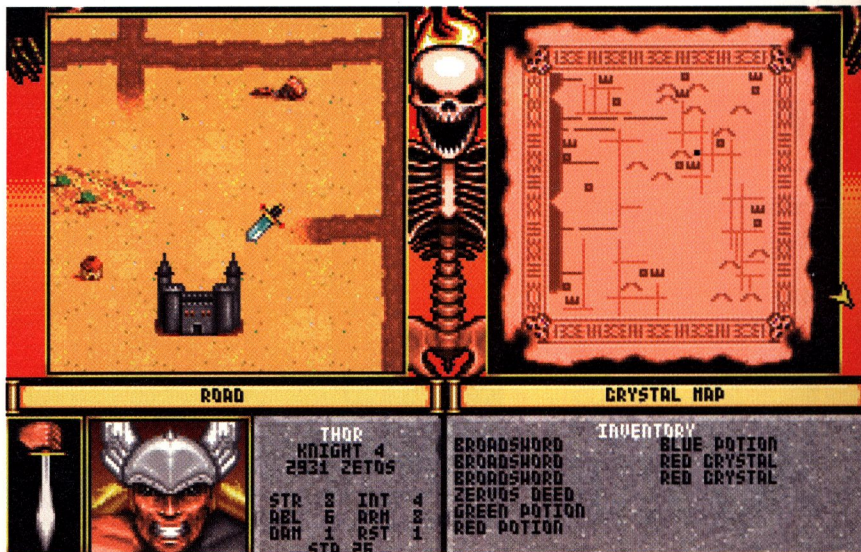
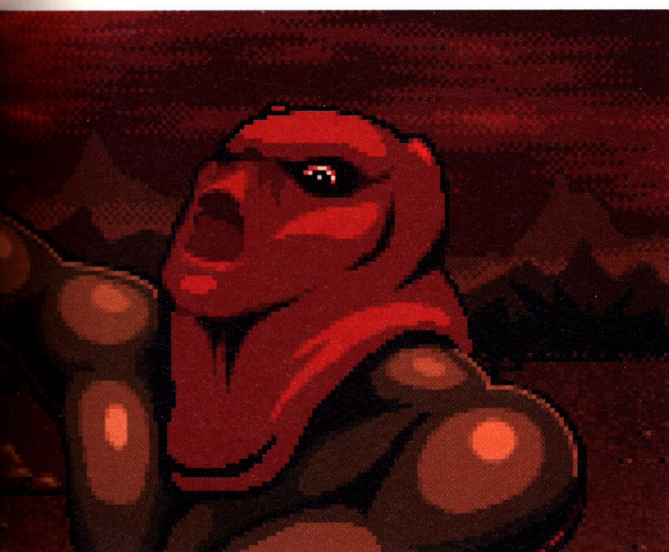
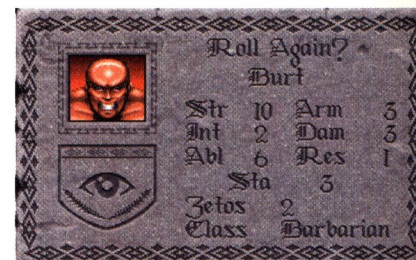
Any Ultima Game

Darklands

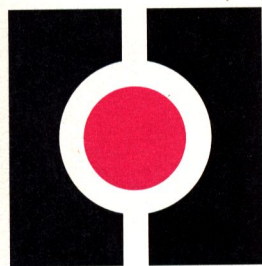
Red Crystal

(Top) Age and experience vs brawn with a broadsword, but somehow zimmer frames don't cut much slack with Lexor.

(Below) Arrrrrr! It's those bloody dice again.



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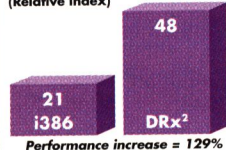
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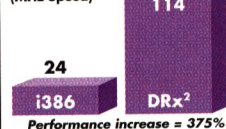
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POWERMARK PEN
with every order
(while stocks last)

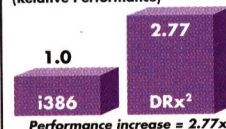
NORTON SYSINFO 6.0 (Relative index)



LANDMARK CPU SPEED V2.0 (MHz Speed)



MICROSOFT WORD for WINDOWS V2.0 (Relative Performance)



MEMORY TUNES

Tulips From Amsterdam
Max Bygraves

Kinky BOOTS
*Honor Blackman &
Patrick McNee*

Sea-Gate Drive
Suzi Quatro



The Media Bank at Powermark

CYRIX FEATURE

THE NEW CYRIX 386 TO 486 PROCESSOR UPGRADE

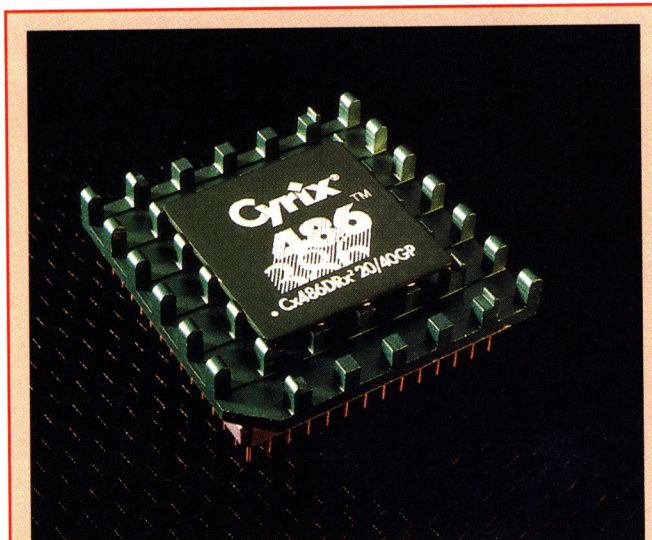
Just when you thought you were up to speed, technology changes. Today's system software puts more demands on your PC. Advanced applications, multimedia and graphics further drain your system's performance. To keep up you could dispose of your 386 computer in favour of a new 486 model.

Or you could take the smarter, more cost effective option.

Plug in the new Cyrix 386 to 486 Processor Upgrade. It's the fastest, most cost effective way to a 486 computer and its totally compatible with the world's leading software: DOS, Windows and OS/2 operating systems.

The upgrade is based on Cyrix's enhanced Cx486 technology. With its clock doubling feature, the processor effectively doubles your computer's internal microprocessor speed and without any modifications to your system. You also get performance enhancements such as 1K on-chip cache, fast I/O, and single cycle instruction execution. These features can boost application performance by up to 70%.

It's easy to install. Just remove your existing processor with the tool provided, clip in the Cyrix processor and load the cache installation software. It's as simple as that. You're ready to run in minutes.



486DRx² upgrade with heat sink

Cyrix®



The Cyrix upgrade microprocessor family

386DX

DX 16MHz to 486 32MHz	£195
DX 20MHz to 486 40MHz	£235
DX 25MHz to 486 50MHz	£265

386SX

SX 16MHz to 486 32MHz	£175	£235
SX 20MHz to 486 40MHz	£175	£235
SX 25MHz to 486 50MHz	£195	£265

LOWER PRICES!

CYRIX DRx²/SRx²

- Single chip upgrade solution for 386 DX and SX personal computers
- Clock doubling technology for increased performance
- 1K on-chip cache
- Very easy to install
- Compatible with DOS, Windows and OS/2
- Free technical support
- Limited lifetime warranty

Package includes...

The package consists of one Cx486DRx² Microprocessor, a 386 removal tool, installation manual, upgrade cache installation software (on both 3.5" and 5.25" media) and a pin 1 locator arrow (for correctly aligning the upgrade processor in the socket). A Cyrix-green heatsink is also included with 20/40 and 25/50 versions.

CALL 081-951 3355 IF THE UPGRADE YOU REQUIRE IS NOT LISTED HERE

**VAT at 17.5% will be
added to all prices**

The Media Bank *at Powermark*

MEMORY

MEMORY FOR DELL

- Price instability - check latest offers on Dell memory before ordering

200 SERIES	
2MB Kit	£84
4MB Kit	£168
300 SERIES	
2MB Kit	£84
4MB Kit	£168
325/D/P, 333/D/P	
2MB → 6MB	£149
2MB → 10MB	£288
NL20, NL25	
2MB Module	£114
320SLi	
512K	£89
1MB	£149
DIMENSION 'I'	
4MB	£177
8MB	£344

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081-
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(50 lines)**

MEMORY FOR OLIVETTI

- Includes full instructions

PCS286	
1MB → 2MB	£84
1MB → 4MB	£168
PCS386SX	
1MB → 2MB	£84
1MB → 4MB	£168
1MB → 6MB	£259
1MB → 8MB	£338
M290S	
2MB Kit	£92
8MB Kit	£362
PCS33	
2MB Kit	£82
M400-10/40/60, M480-10/20	
4MB Kit	£168
16MB Kit	£320
QUADERNO	
512K	£89
1MB Kit	£149

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MEMORY LANE

Do you remember...

- ... Sunglasses with windscreen wipers
- ... BOAC shoulder bags
- ... Tuning a PAL encoder in any old home computer
- ... 3D cinema



MEMORY FOR COMPAQ

- Upgrade kits are fully interchangeable with Compaq kits
- Call for configurations not shown here
- Authorised Compaq dealer

DESKPRO 386/20/25/e/s	
1MB add-on Module	£99
4MB add-on Module	£224
4MB Expansion Board	£249
SYSTEMPRO, DESKPRO 486/33L, 50L & 486/25	
8MB Module	£299
32MB Module	£1444
DESKPRO 286N, 386N, 386S/20 & PROSIGNIA	
1MB Module	£52
2MB Module	£89
4MB Module	£149
DESKPRO XE & II FAMILY	
4MB	£167
8MB	£325
PROLINEA 4/25S, 4/33, 4/50, 4/66, NET 1, MT	
2MB	£79
4MB	£155
8MB	£249
LTE Lite 386, 386s/20	
2MB Board	£92
4MB Board	£189
8MB Board	£338
CONTURA 3/20, 3/25, 3/25C	
2MB-Card	£78
4MB Card	£159
8MB Card	£287

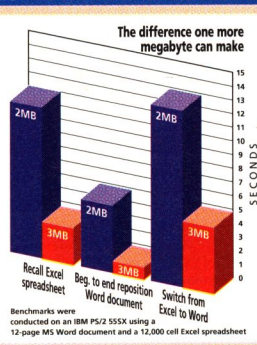
MEMORY FOR TOSHIBA

T1000/E/XE/LE, T1800, T1850C, T2000SX, T2000SX, T2000SX	
2MB Card	£92
4MB Card	£165
8MB Card	£299
T2200SX, 3300SX	
1MB	£146
2MB	£297
T1200XE	
2MB Card	£93
T1600/T5100	
2MB Card	£89
T4400, T6400 SX/C, DX/C	
2MB Card	£89
4MB Card	£159
8MB Card	£309
T4500, T4600, T3400CT, T4700CT, T1950CT	
8MB Module	£389
T5200/C & T8500	
2MB Module	£94
8MB Module	£375
12MB Kit	£464

**ALL OUR MEMORY
PRODUCTS ARE 100%
COMPATIBLE AND
COME WITH FULL 5
YEAR NO-QUIBBLE
GUARANTEE**

MEMORY UPGRADES - AN EXPLANATION

Most major software packages, particularly MS Windows, demand large amounts of memory to work effectively. Upgrading from the standard 2MB/4MB enables you to work efficiently AND allows you to run more than one application at a time. Memory upgrades from Powermark are easy to install with little or no software setup - with most upgrades just plug in and go. If however you are unsure our technical support team will happily talk you through the upgrade procedure.



SIMMS

- Beware of low grade economy modules with slow refresh cycles and low input capacitance. Powermark only supply total specification SIMMS direct from leading manufacturers.
 - Price instability - check latest offers on SIMM prices before ordering
- | | |
|---------------------|------|
| 256K x 9 - 100ns | £11 |
| 256K x 9 - 80ns | £12 |
| 1M x 8 - 80ns | £28 |
| 1M x 9 - 100ns | £29 |
| 1M x 9 - 80ns | £31 |
| 1M x 9 - 70ns | £32 |
| 1M x 9 (9cs) - 70ns | £39 |
| 1M x 9 - 60ns | £42 |
| 4M x 9 - 80ns | £118 |
| 4M x 9 - 70ns | £117 |

GOLD EDGED SIMMS

- Specified by many PC manufacturers
 - Lower MTBF
- | | |
|-------------|-----|
| 1M x 9 - 70 | £47 |
| 1M x 9 - 60 | £47 |

PCMCIA

- All formats stocked: JEDEC, FLASH, OTPROM, DRAM, etc
 - Check compatibility before ordering
- | | |
|-----------|------|
| 128K SRAM | £29 |
| 256K SRAM | £58 |
| 512K SRAM | £89 |
| 1MB SRAM | £129 |
| 2MB SRAM | £199 |

DRAMS

256K x 1 - 100ns	£2.62
256K x 1 - 80ns	£2.80
256K x 4 - 80ns	£5.77
1M x 1 - 80ns	£4.99
1M x 1 - 70ns	£5.20
1M x 4 - 80ns	£17.80

Prices (especially memory) and specifications are subject to change and availability. All trademarks & tradenames are the property of their respective manufacturers/owners.

Certificate no. FS 26535
BS5750 registered for the supply of computer, printer and workstation memory, processor and other upgrades.
Powermark plc is regularly assessed by the British Standard Institute to ensure compliance with the quality standard.

MEMORY FOR ELONEX

• Includes full fitting instructions	
PC 286M	
2MB Kit	POWERCUT! £87
4MB Kit	POWERCUT! £175
PC386SXM, SXB, 386/16, B/33	
2MB Kit	POWERCUT! £78
4MB Kit	POWERCUT! £156
8MB Kit	POWERCUT! £299
PC433M, 450M, 466M	
4MB Kit	POWERCUT! £158
8MB Kit	POWERCUT! £308
16MB Kit	POWERCUT! £606
LT386SX/P	
2MB Kit	POWERCUT! £79
4MB Kit	POWERCUT! £154

BARGAIN BASEMENT

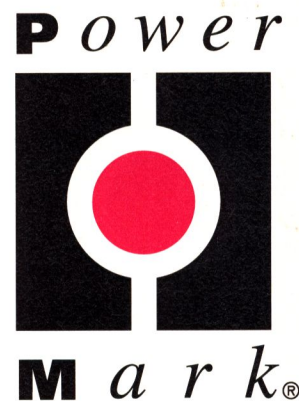
CHERRY KEYBOARD	£25
MOUSE PM10 MS compatible, with Mousemat	£8
SOUNDBLASTER V.2 DELUXE	£44
TRIGENT 1MB SVGA CARD	£49
PANASONIC CD562	£129
LOTUS ORGANISER V.1	£16
HARVARD GRAPHICS WINDOWS V.2	£99

MEMORY FOR PACKARD BELL

• Includes full fitting instructions	
LEGEND 200/316SX	
2MB Kit	£87
4MB Kit	£184
LEGEND 600, 900	
4MB Kit	£169
8MB Kit	£325
486 LOCAL BUS	
2MB Module	£79
4MB Module	£178
FORCE RANGE	£Call

DELIVERY CHARGES

UK Mainland:	
Next working day courier delivery to your door: only £7 per order (£5 per CD ROM software order)	
Europe:	
2 day delivery to your door: Call	



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Guaranteed same day despatch on virtually all orders placed even up to 5.30pm.
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Our sales people are the best. They are trained specialists in their chosen field - multimedia, memory of all types and mass storage.

TESTED PRODUCTS
We only supply products from leading manufacturers. Powermark plc is the only BS5750 upgrade reseller.
TECHNICAL SUPPORT
Dedicated after sales technical support teams on line to help with installation.

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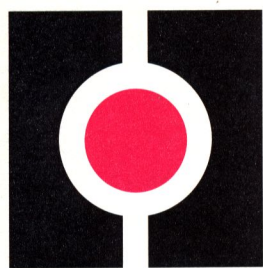
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Power



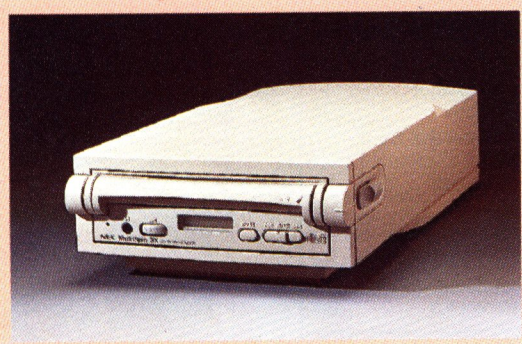
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NEC MULTISPIN 3Xe

MEMORABLE ADS

Famous ad campaigns
And all because the lady
loves Milk Tray

Milk Tray

Splash it on all over

Brut

Ba Ba, Ba Ba, Ba Ba,
Ba Ba, Ba Ba Ba,....

Pearl & Dean cinema
advertising



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NEC

NEC CD ROM DRIVES

NEC's new range supports SCSI I and SCSI II standards and with the suitable interface/software drivers works with the operating systems listed below:

- MS DOS (and variations)
- Apple Mac (inc. System 7)
- Microsoft Windows 3.x
- Microsoft Windows NT
- IBM O/S 2 Version 1.6
- IBM O/S 2 Version 2.0
- Novell Network 3.11
- Novell Network 4.0

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NEC FEATURE

NEC CD ROM DRIVES

NEW! NEC

MULTISPIN 2Xi

- Double speed multisession internal drive
- 320ms average access time
- 256K continuous flow cache memory
- Dust door and auto lens cleaning

NEC 2Xi £189

NEC 2Xi WITH ISA KIT £239

NEW! NEC

MULTISPIN 4X PRO

- Quad speed external drive
- 600K/sec sustained data transfer
- 180ms average access time
- 256K continuous flow cache memory
- Full function control panel
- Dust door and auto lens cleaning

NEC 4X PRO £639

NEC 4X PRO WITH ISA KIT £699

NEC 4X PRO WITH ADVANCED ISA KIT £799



NEC MULTISPIN 3Xi

NEC CD ROM DRIVES

NEC MULTISPIN 3XP

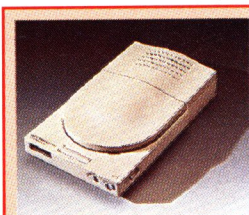
- Portable triple speed drive
- 450K/sec sustained data transfer
- 250ms average access time
- Full function control panel

NEC 3XP £319

NEC 3XP WITH ISA KIT £369

NEC 3XP WITH ADVANCED ISA KIT £459

NEC 3XP WITH PARALLEL TO SCSI KIT £390



NEC MULTISPIN 3XP

NEC CD ROM DRIVES

NEW! NEC 3Xi

- Triple speed internal drive
- MPC I & II formats
- New loading mechanism
- 256K cache
- 195ms access time

NEC 3Xi £305

NEC 3Xi WITH ISA KIT £353

NEC 3Xi WITH ADVANCED ISA KIT £443

NEW! NEC 3Xe

- Triple speed external drive
- MPC I & II formats
- New loading mechanism
- 256K cache
- 195ms access time

NEC 3Xe £369

NEC 3Xe WITH ISA KIT £412

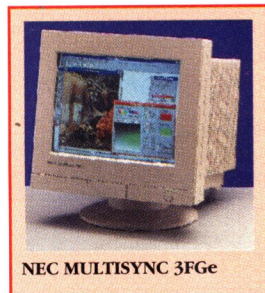
NEC 3Xe WITH ADVANCED ISA KIT £508

MULTIMEDIA EXPERTS AVAILABLE FOR SPECIALIST ADVICE

NEC MONITORS

NEC MULTISYNC 3FGe £467

- 15" CRT
- Unlimited colours
- 1024 x 768 resolution
- Complies with all EEC health and safety regulations
- 0.28mm dot pitch
- Horizontal synchronisation 47.5KHz to 49.5KHz
- Vertical synchronisation 55Hz to 90Hz



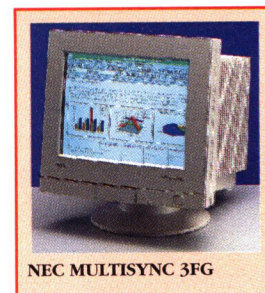
NEC MULTISYNC 3FGe

NEC MULTISYNC 4FGe £525

- 15" CRT
- Unlimited colours
- 1024 x 768 resolution
- Complies with all EEC health and safety regulations
- 0.28mm dot pitch
- Horizontal synchronisation 31KHz to 62KHz
- Vertical synchronisation 55Hz to 90Hz

NEC MULTISYNC 5FGe £834

- 17" CRT
- Unlimited colours
- 1024 x 768 resolution
- Complies with all EEC health and safety regulations
- 0.28mm dot pitch
- Horizontal synchronisation 31KHz to 62KHz
- Vertical synchronisation 55Hz to 90Hz



NEC MULTISYNC 3FG

NEC MONITORS

NEC MULTISYNC 3V £385

- 15" FST with FullScan, Provides 29% more image area than standard 14" CRTs
- Low radiation
- Intelligent Power Management in accordance with VESA specifications

NEC MULTISYNC 3FG £357

- 15" CRT
- Unlimited colours
- 1024 x 768 resolution
- Complies with all EEC health and safety regulations
- 0.28mm dot pitch
- Horizontal synchronisation 31.5KHz to 38KHz
- Vertical synchronisation 55Hz to 90Hz

NEC MULTISYNC 6FGe £1638

- 21" CRT
- Unlimited colours
- 1280 x 1024 resolution
- Complies with all EEC health and safety regulations
- 0.28mm dot pitch
- Horizontal synchronisation 27KHz to 79KHz
- Vertical synchronisation 55Hz to 90Hz

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CREATIVE LABS FEATURE

SOUNDBLASTER CARDS

SOUNDBLASTER

V.2 DELUXE **POWERCUT!** £44

- Includes Indy 500 and Lemmings

SOUNDBLASTER PACK £84

Includes SoundBlaster V.2 Deluxe, amplified speakers, joystick and bundled software.

SOUNDBLASTER

PRO BASIC £59

WAVEBLASTER £125

- Add-on daughterboard for SoundBlaster 16
- Sound Read Only Memory
- 213 DC quality musical instrument sounds
- Presets include 128 instruments, 18 drum kits, 50 sound effects

SOUNDBLASTER 16 £189

AW5 32



ALL OUR PRODUCTS ARE 100% COMPATIBLE AND COME WITH A MINIMUM 12 MONTH GUARANTEE

SOUNDBLASTER PRO DELUXE

£75

- 20 voice enhanced 4-operator FM synthesiser
- Stereo recording for line-in and CD-audio
- Digital and analogue mixer
- Full software control of fade-in, fade-out, pan, volume, left/right steering and microphone mixing
- Includes Indy 500, Lemmings, MPC Encyclopaedia on CD ROM



Soundblaster 16 ASP MULTICD

VIDEO BOARDS

CREATIVE LABS VIDEOBLASTER SE £209

- Displays full-motion, digital video in a moveable, sizeable window
 - Includes MS Video for Windows, Aldus Photostyler and JPEG
 - Overlays computer text and graphics on video
- VIDEOSPIGOT** **POWERCUT!** £194
- Video capture card giving full motion video in real time at up to 30 frames per second
 - Includes Microsoft Video for Windows

TV CODER

- Use your TV as a monitor
- Flicker-free display
- Converts SVGA to composite video and SVHS
- VideoBlaster interface
- TV Panel software included



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MULTIMEDIA KITS

DISCOVERY PACK INTERNAL £434

- Panasonic CR563 multispin/twinspeed internal CD ROM drive
- SoundBlaster Pro 16
- Pro Digital speakers
- Microphone
- Bundled software included

DISCOVERY PACK EXTERNAL £485

- As above but with external drive

PROFESSIONAL PACK INTERNAL £434

- Panasonic CR563 multispin/twinspeed CD ROM drive
- SoundBlaster Pro 16
- Pro Digital speakers
- Microphone
- Bundled software included

PROFESSIONAL PACK EXTERNAL £485

- As above but with external drive

SOUNDBLASTER CD 16 £424

- Includes SoundBlaster Pro 16, Double Speed multisection internal CD ROM drive, amplified speakers and top selling CD titles

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SOUNDBLASTER 16 BASIC £105

SOUNDBLASTER 16 ASP MULTICD £159

- 16-bit stereo sampling and playback MultiCD
- 20-voice enhanced 4-operator stereo FM-synthesiser
- CD ROM interface for Panasonic, Mitsumi and Sony CD ROM drives
- Stereo recording for line-in and CD-audio
- Full duplex MIDI interface
- Expansion for PCM wave table synthesiser
- Digital and analogue mixer

SOUNDBLASTER PRO DELUXE PACK £139

Pack includes SoundBlaster Pro card, dynamic microphone, amplified speakers, joystick, 1 in/1 out MIDI interface, MIDIsoft Recording Session software and bundled CD ROM software.

SOUNDBLASTER 16 ASP SCSI £179

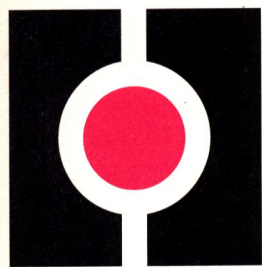
- 16-bit real time compression/decompression in hardware
- 20 voice enhanced 4 operator stereo synthesiser
- Joystick port
- Bundled software included
- Supports SCSI I & II
- Includes EZ-SCSI software

MIDIBLASTER £159

- For amateur and professional music composition and presentation
- 20 polyphonic sounds and drums
- 16 channels, 128 preset sounds, 33 preset effects, 55 preset drums
- Bundled software

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**0500-
600 486**

ADVENTURE CD ROMS

LABYRINTH OF TIME	£25
JUTLAND	£39
DARK SUN SHATTERED	
LAND	£29
GOBLINS III	£32
LOST IN TIME	£35
REBEL ASSAULT	
(STAR WARS)	£31
GATEWAY II	£23
ALONE IN THE DARK	£29
SHADOW OF	
THE COMET	£29
CYBERSPACE	£31
MARIO IS MISSING	£29
LANDS OF LORE	£29
MAD DOG MACREE	£28

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TOP TEN

Last months best selling
CD ROMS at Powermark

1. Microsoft Encarta (9)
2. 7th Guest (5)
3. Rebel Assault (1)
4. Day of the Tentacle (2)
5. Jurassic Park (-)
6. Lover's Guide (-)
7. Dracula Unleashed (-)
8. Interactive Space Encyclopaedia (-)
9. Mad Dog McCree (-)
10. Walkthroughs and Flybys (8)

Brackets show previous position



ENTERTAINMENT CD ROMS

ADVANTAGE TENNIS	£26
AEGIS GUARDIAN	
OF FLEET	£42
AKIRA	£19
ANECDOTE 3	£9
BATTLE CHESS	£25
CAPITOL HILL	£27
CASTLES 2	£29
CHESSMASTER 3000	£27
CHAOS CONTROL	£Call
CONSPIRACY	£37
• Act the role of a KGB agent	
CYBER RACE	£44
DARK SEED	£31
DAY OF THE TENTACLE	£22
DEATHSTAR ARCADE	£19
DRACULA UNLEASHED	£25
DUNE	£29
• Adventure game based on the best selling Frank Herbert Novel	
DUNGEON HACK	£28
EYE OF THE	
BEHOLDER	£Call
GABRIEL KNIGHT	£31
HELL CAB	£56
INCA 2	£37
INDIANA JONES IV	£36
JOURNEYMAN PROJECT	£31
JURASSIC PARK	£24
KINGS QUEST VI	£31
LANDS OF LAW	£37
• A full interactive fantasy role play	
THE LAWNMOWER MAN	£35
LEGEND OF KYRANDIA	£34
• A fantasy adventure in an enchanted forest inhabited with dragons	
LEGEND OF	
KYRANDIA 2	£Call
LEISURE SUIT	
LARRY 6 (18)	£29
LIBERATION	£Call
LOOM	£38
LORD OF THE RINGS	£31
MANIAC MANSION	£39
MARIO IS MISSING	
DELUXE	£31
MICROCOSM	£34
MICROSOFT GOLF	£36
NICK FALDO GOLF	£28
POLICE QUEST IV	£32
• All new police adventure game	
PROTOSTAR	£27
QUANTUM GATE	£31
RETURN TO ZORK	£29
RISE OF THE ROBOTS	£42
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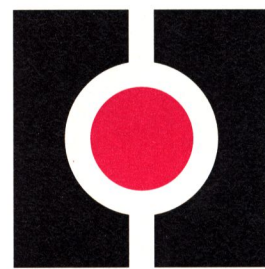
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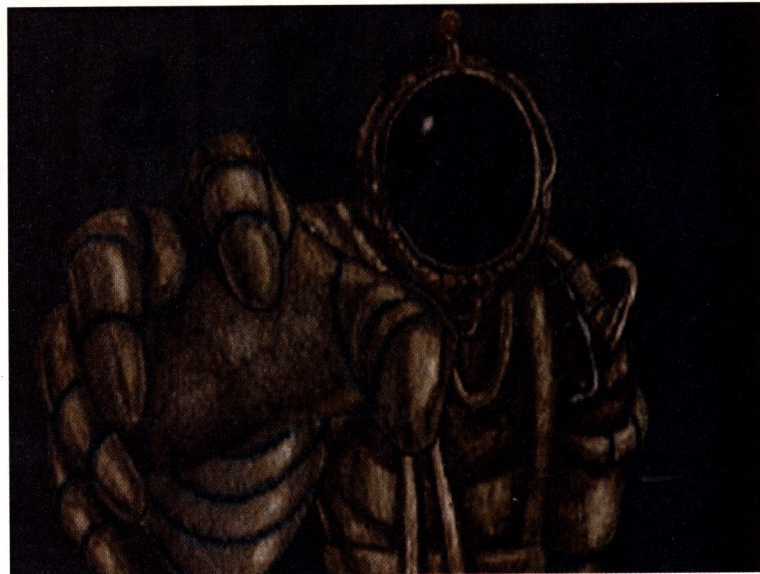
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IN EXTREMIS

Guns. Mazes. Monsters.
Sound a touch familiar?

Charlie Brooker enters the endless hallways of *In Extremis* and finds himself in the ever-lengthening shadow of *Doom*...

T

HE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY has always been prone to slavish bandwagon-jumping and mindless trend-following.

TV companies, for instance, recently decided that everybody in Britain loves detective series', and so they set about clogging up the schedules with thousands of grumpy sods. It was impossible to switch on the box without being confronted by an episode of *Inspector Morse*, *Prime Suspect*, *A Touch Of Frost* or *Spender*. At one time there were so many fictional television crime-stoppers, I half expected them to set up their own union and go on strike for juicier murders, emptier private lives, denser sidekicks and drier cynicism.

Hollywood reacted in similar fashion following the success of *Basic Instinct*, churning out no end of murder 'n' sex dramas each featuring kinkier sex and ghastlier death than the last. I'm still waiting for *Ripsaw-Wielding Shoe Fetishist*, starring Sharon Stone, Madonna, Michael Douglas and Pee Wee Herman.

The pc games industry is no different. Right now there's a torrential flood of first-person perspective 3D kill 'em-ups.

Shadowcaster, *Terminator: Rampage*, *Doom*, *Blake Stone* and now the latest addition to the genre: *In Extremis*.

Nothing compares to *Doom*

Now, as everybody knows, *Doom* stands decapitated head and blood-stained shoulders above the rest. It forces them to kneel at its feet at gunpoint and lick its combat boots until they can see their sorry faces reflected back in them. So how will *In Extremis* fare as it enters the ring? Does it cuff *Doom* round the ear and give it a dead arm, or does it simply join the back of the queue for the boot-licking contest like all the others?

Things don't look good right from the start: our hero, the man you must guide to victory, is called Bob Jones. Not the most inspiring name for a hero, really. Sounds more like the bloke who comes round to unblock your toilet with a generous hairy bum cleavage and a smouldering roll-up hanging from his lips. But no, according to the manual this Bob Jones is a top space marine, who's been spending his time off 'enjoying a relaxing time by the swimming pool surrounded by a bevy of buxom beauties.' Hmm. Unfortunately for Bob, his Spaceclub 18-30 holiday has been cut short by an urgent call for help: a top secret research laboratory, which the military hid in deep space, has mysteriously disappeared and he's got to jet off into space and find it. And find it he does, moments before his own spaceship blows up for no good reason whatsoever, forcing him to eject into space and clamber up the exhaust pipe of the offending laboratory. Standing alone, in his bulky hi-tech space marine clobber, and with only a generous



(Above left) All the monsters are an unpleasant shade of green.
(Above right) Aahh, they don't make spacesuits like they used to.
(Above) Finding all the various access codes can be an enormous pain in the arse.

Geiger counter

First impressions are good. The spacelab interior is moody and atmospheric, with all manner of H. R. Geiger-style 'metallic spaghetti' decorating the walls. A few human corpses are sprinkled around on the floor, as if Jeffrey Dahmer and Hannibal Lecter had held a boisterous party there the night before. Computer terminals blink away in the darkness. 'Eee, it's just like *Alien*', you say to yourself.

Movement is smooth but fairly slow. Bob's space suit is somewhat bulky after all, and the screen bobs up and down as he plods along to the sound of his own weighty footsteps. In fact, he walks rather like somebody wearing a large pair of skis attached to their feet and this sense of hindered mobility actually adds to the game's 'fear factor'; you soon realise that

it's going to be totally impossible to run away from anything that lurches out at you.

And it's not long before something does lurch in your direction. Almost immediately you'll



(Below) Monsters leap out at you, but since you move as if you've got concrete feet you're likely to die.



IN PERSPECTIVE

In *Extremis* is better is better than *Terminator Rampage*, but only just. *Doom* is still the best.

Doom

Wolfenstein

Terminator Rampage

In Extremis

find yourself set upon by a pair of pointy-headed, snarling green thingamijigs. The alarming thing about the monsters on-board is that, rather than spit acid or fire lasers at you, they beat you up. In a panic, you try and dodge the greenies' flailing tentacles and fire your weapon at them. Once killed, the aliens explode, causing green goo to run down your visor as if you'd sneezed inside your helmet.

It's at these times when *In Extremis* is at its most effective

– the aliens leap out of nowhere without warning and it does genuinely make you jump. The lack of music makes these rapid bouts of screaming all the more scary. But these moments of tense panic soon become outweighed by the mundane nature of the overall gameplay, and it's this which I'd like to take to task.

I've got the key

To advance from level to level in *In Extremis*, it's necessary to locate and utilise all manner of security cards. There are elevator cards which let you gain access to higher levels, and computer cards which open sealed doors and the like. Further-

more, each level has its own access code which must be tapped into fixed terminals, allowing you to collect more weapons, health boosters, oxygen packs (your air supply is constantly diminishing), bombs and batteries.

In practice, this comes across as bureaucracy at its worst. For instance; sometimes, in order to get from one level to the next, you'll have to do the following:

1. Tap in the corresponding access code (which you wrote down on a bit of paper)

2. Search around for a security card in order to open a sealed door.

3. Search around for another security card in order to learn the access code for the next level up.

4. By now you'll have found the lift, but for some reason you can't make it go anywhere. Time to walk back out again and search for a new elevator card. In order to find it, you'll probably have to use one of your security cards again – no doubt the old one which you dumped when you found the new one. so you'll have to go back and find that as well.

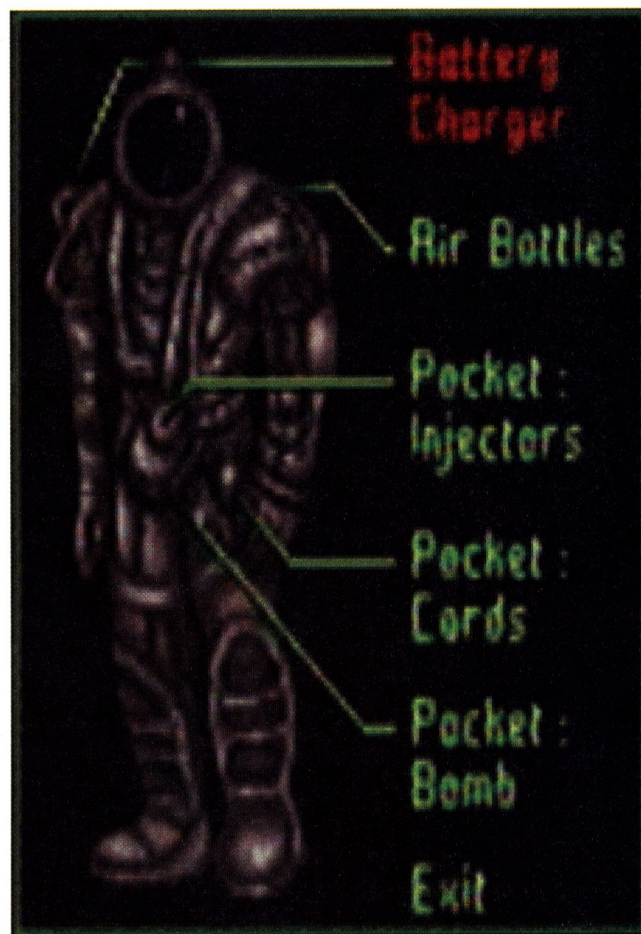
You get the picture. Presumably, this sort of thing is an attempt to add depth to the game – in which case give me shallow,

mindless entertainment any day of the week. Anyone who's ever queued for three hours to pick up an emergency passport

only to be told that they've filled out one line on their form incorrectly and have to start all over again will be on familiar territory. This isn't fun, it's just irritating.

Occasionally you'll discover something new, however, moments like these are few and far between. There are a fair number of levels, but they're all tedious Hampton Court Maze-style affairs and the constant wandering around in search of access cards soon becomes as monotonous as watching 18 episodes of *Lovejoy* in a row.

It's a shame really. If Blue Sphere had injected just a little more action and removed some of the card-searching, they might have had a sure-fire winner on their



(Above left) Allergic to monsters, you end up sneezing inside your helmet.

(Above right) Bob models the elegant shell suit of the future.

hands. It still wouldn't have come close to *Doom* of course but it could have come a little bit closer. As it stands, expecting anyone who's experienced *Doom*'s thrills and spills to be impressed by this effort is rather like taking a group of battle-hardened Vietnam veterans onto a fairground ghost train and expecting them to wet their pants with fear. ☒



SCORE

You'll shriek!
You'll shout!
You'll yawn!

Minimum Memory: 2Mb (1Mb XMS)

Minimum Processor: 386/16MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 15Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Gravis US, Covox, Sound Source.

Controls: Keyboard or joystick

Comments: Installation takes a long time; you may have evolved into a higher form of life by the time it's complete. Digitised sound is available through the PC speaker but it's too high-pitched and squeaky to bear.

Price: £37.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Published: US Gold/BlueSphere

Telephone: 021 625 3388

JONNY QUEST:

CURSE OF THE MAYAN WARRIORS



Jonny Quest. Once a cartoon series, now a computer game. **Chris Anderson** thinks it may have lost something in the translation.



ARTOON SPECIALISTS Hanna Barbera have finally twigged that there's money to be made out of PC games, and have joined forces with Hollyware

Entertainment to produce a computer game based on their cartoon series *Jonny Quest*. What they haven't twigged is that you can't just put together any old tosh and expect people to buy it on the strength of the TV tie-in.

Jonny Quest attempts to combine the puzzle-solving elements of an adventure game with the action elements of a beat 'em-up, but fails miserably on both counts. Considering the quality of many of the other arcade-adventure games currently on sale, it's a bit of an insult to the PC games buying public that they should be expected to even consider buying something that has obviously had very little effort put into producing it.

Nothing to offer

What we have here is a complete catastrophe. It's not unusual to come across games that are lacking in one or more departments, but these games usually have at least one redeeming feature that saves them from becoming a total disaster. *Jonny Quest*, however, has absolutely nothing going for it.

Forget the silly plot about Jonny and his mate Hadji and their canine companion Bandit running about in Guatemala looking for five lost wonders. The game



itself consists of guiding Jonny and co. around a decidedly unattractive playing area, solving puzzles that are so easy they are an insult to the intelligence of anyone clever enough to have loaded the game up in the first place, and fighting baddies every two minutes in combat sequences that will make you laugh aloud the first time you see them. I played the game for about four hours, but in all honesty I was bored brainless after the first 20 minutes. If there is anything of any interest in this game, I certainly didn't come across it.

The animated introductory sequence is about the most exciting part of the whole affair. It fools you into thinking you are about to take part in a cartoon-style arcade adventure, but when it's over you are faced with an extremely dull top-down view of the playing area with three tiny bods stuck in the middle of it.



You have to take control of Jonny, and wherever he goes the other two will follow. Moving Jonny about is no problem. Moving him where you actually want him to go is a different matter entirely. This is because Hadji and the dog frequently get in the way, blocking doors and entrances when you want to go through them. Much Jonny-joggling is required just so you can get the others to move out of the way. This can be more than a little frustrating and more or less sums up the game on the whole. The graphics are awful, the puzzles aren't exactly mind-bending, my joystick didn't work and the arcade sequences are a complete joke. Don't buy it! **Z**



SCORE

Can basically be summed up in one word. Dreadful.

Minimum Memory: 1Mb

Minimum Processor: 286/12MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 5.4 Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: EGA

Soundcards Supported: Roland, Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Ultrasound

Controls: Joystick, keyboard

Comments: DOS 5.0 or above required; Hayes-compatible modems supported; 132-column printers supported

Price: £29.99 **Release date:** Out now

Publisher: Software Business

Telephone: 0480 496497

(Top left) The cop-out screen. Race rescues Jonny from the temple when he gets stuck. (Top right) Kill a baddie and watch him do the pogo. (Above) Jonny uses his wrist communicator to summon help when he can't be bothered to work out a puzzle. (Below) The view screen. The trickiest puzzle you'll face here is how to get Jonny out the door without the other two getting in the way.



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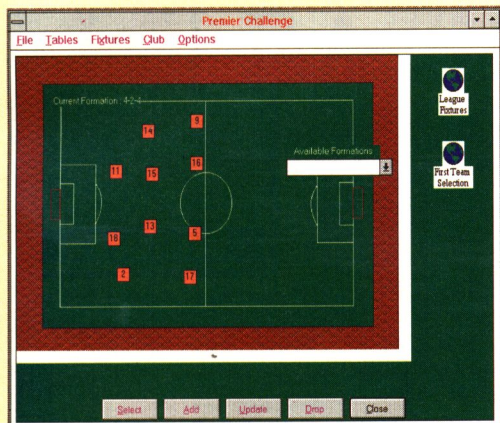
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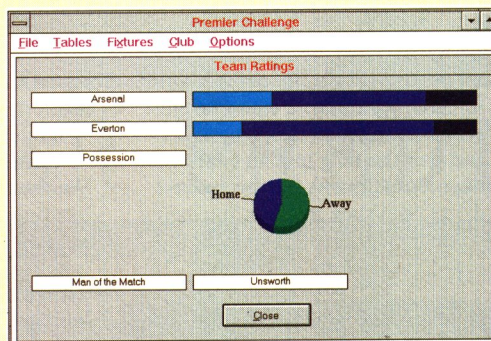
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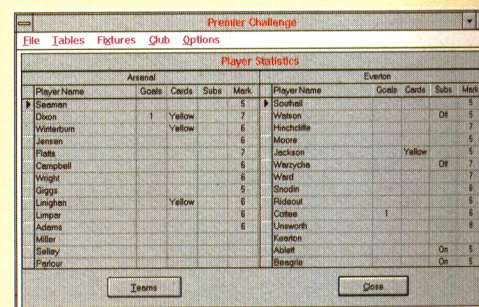
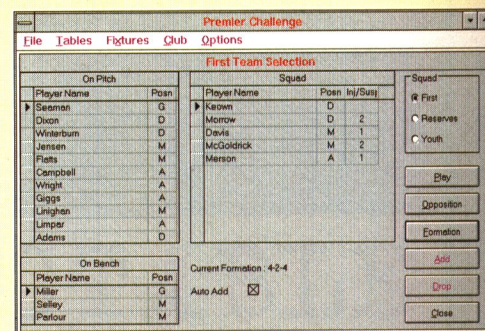
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Despite the arrival of two texture-mapped polygon twins (one a bubbly bouncing square, one a trapezium) earlier this year, the relationship between *Underworld II* and **David McCandless** is on the rocks. After a long fling with *Doom* earlier this month, and a brief drunken snog with *Shadowcaster*, he's now set his sights on the latest RPG 'looker', *Arena: The Elder Scrolls*.



H, THE winter of '93... the texture-mapped winter of love, permissiveness, freedom. Long, dark nights with *Ultima Underworld II* – the Brigitte Bardot of role-playing games. Exploring; discovering; role-playing. We did it all. The magic, the mystery. On parapets, in dungeons, knee-deep in lava – no place was taboo. Ever since then, I, you, all of us have been searching for the new role-playing fix. *Lands Of Lore*, *Shadowcaster*, *Betrayal At Kronador* – all these have been lacking, the kick and addictiveness of *Underworld*. As each new RPG appears on the horizon we weep, we drool, we slaver with anticipation.

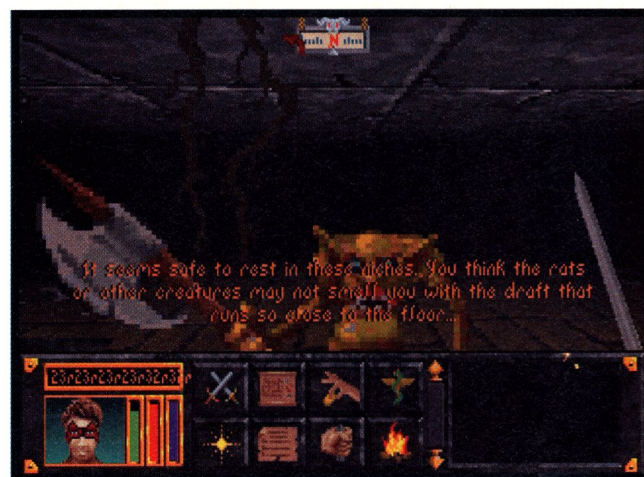
Arena: The Elder Scrolls is the latest object of our excitement. Programmed by Bethesda (*Terminator 2029*, *Terminator Rampage*), it's what you'd call a cross-dimensional, inter-continental, bitmapped-wrapped, full-scale, prime class RPG-athon.

The plot

The Septim family has been ruling the Tamriel for generations, since big, bad Tiber Septim invaded sometime in the First Era. The populace of this fair and varied land calls it *Arena*.

Recently, the monarch, Uriel Septim, was usurped by his chief sorcerer Jagar Jharm, who's taken control of the kingdom, adopted Uriel's form and sent the King into an alternate dimension. Ria Silmane, the second-best wizard, has been slain by Jagar. You, being the nearest heroic person, have been imprisoned in the castle's dungeons. Using

'The spells are probably the best-looking and most pyro-technic of any RPG.'



(Above) Great advice from the *Arena* 'dungeon master'. Yeah, hide in a niche – great idea. The rats may not whiff you but the goblins will sure as dammit see you ('Hey look, it's a six foot high elf with a longsword'). (Below) No big surprises here. Select a weapon with the left mouse button and it will appear rather ostentatiously in your effigy's hand. Right-click to glean more info on the object.

special magic powers, Ria contacts you from the grave, giving you the key to your cell and a magic exit to escape through.

The idea

Before you can take on a quest to recover the six pieces of the magic special thing and save Uriel, the kingdom, and the world as we know it, you must escape from the dungeon. You're given directions from the exit and woah – you find your sword and gold outside the cell. The prison is

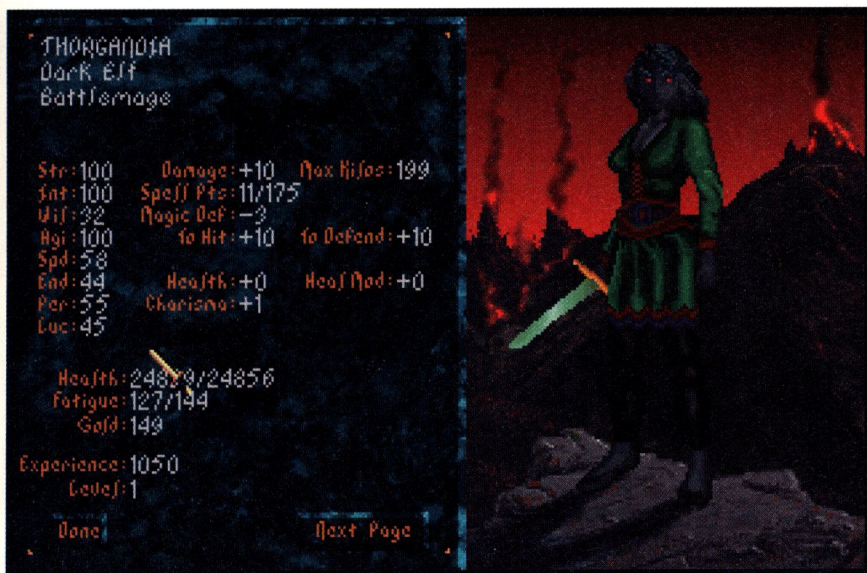
packed with goblins and rats, but it's worth exploring to accumulate weapons and armour to sell off later.

Once out, you find yourself in a provincial town and must set about obtaining a room, bartering for equipment and spells, and seeking out individuals who want tasks done. Each town is a hefty size, with tudor-panelled domiciles, guilds, temples, manors and taverns. The streets are full of aimlessly-wandering characters who you can click on if you want to ask them something. By gradual means, you must gain experience and reputation, explore the Tamriel's provinces, and piece together clues to the whereabouts of the 'magic things'.

On the design

Some may call *Arena* a tribute, others may say it's a rip-off, but play it and you'll see elements of *Betrayal At Kronador* (continental playing area and outside bits), *Eye Of The Beholder* (AD&D-style stats and modifiers) and *Worlds Of Legend* (the ability to design your own spells).

Play it for a little longer and its main influences will show through the cracks. *Arena* blatantly 'borrows' the *Ultima Underworld I* and *II* movement and combat



ARENA: THE



RATHER PREDICTABLE

Behold ye the rather predictable it's-an-RPG-so-we'll-pull-out-the-main-screen-and-annotate it box.

1 Name: make a little plaque for your moniker (unfortunately, *Arena* allows you to have a name too long for this box, so if your title is polysyllabic – Garksa'He Nagthoran or Thorgandian Son of Thorgandia, since we're in RPG world – it over-spills and makes a complete mess of your dashboard.

2 Portrait: the background of your ugly mug gives you a hint of your health level. Aqua (or light blue as it's called in the real world) is healthy; red: close to death; blue: under some magic effect; green: poisoned or pissed; yellow: diseased and covered in welting pustules leaking some kind of greyish cheesy liquid.

3 Attack mode: clicking this icon unsheathes your current weapon. Strolling around a town with your broadsword lolling out isn't recommended. Some people will ignore you and others will start to talk (especially if you're wearing some see-through PVC armour).

4 Spell cast: the exploding sun casts your selected spell. Fire regulations state: no fireball casting in narrow corridors.

5 Fingers and coin: pilfer, nick, steal. Depending on your luck and the severity of your parents' discipline, you may or may not dare to pick a person or a lock. But, then again, it's worth noting that gold pieces are hard to come by.

6 Hand: this brings up a list of usable objects – generally potions and other magical devices, which you can then use either offensively or defensively.

7 Snake staff: the staff brings up your current status: location, date, time of day, and general well-being – that sort of thing.

8 The log book: this is an automated list of any quests you decided to undertake. Very useful for forgetful mages.

9 Campfire: rest, why don't ye, to regain lost hits, spell and fatigue points. The nicer the accommodation, the faster you heal.

10 Automap: traces your progress on a scroll. Just like *Underworld* (down to the typeface) you can jot things of interest down.

11 Continental map: right-clicking the automap brings up a geographical representation of the world as you know it. Note the usual inexplicable fantasy novel mountain ranges and, oh look, an evil domain with a geologically inexact volcano.

ELDER SCROLLS



FREEDOM OF THE FLESH

Engage in the capitalist shenanigans of a developing medieval country. Accumulate wealth, hire yourself out as odd-job man to the rich, get a reputation and explore the countryside looking for trolls.

Bartering

'So you want to sell some kit? Go see the strapping man at the equipment store then.' This was my advice and I didst gladly pluck it from the nipple of Fortune herself. I sallied forth and didst barter with said bronzed Adonis. 35 gold pieces for my elven sword he proffered. 45, I returned. 36 was his reply. 36? What manner of progression art that? 'A crap one,' my fool muttered.

Mage's Guild

After my experience with the Herculean shopkeeper, I sallied forth unto the Mage's Guild. Mine intent was to have the sorcerer identify a magic artefact. Ten gold pieces was his price. 'Do we got a deal?' asketh the mage. What? Doth the mage moonlight as an extra on *Cagney And Lacey*? Do we got a deal? Wanna a cup of cwoa-fee?

The lord of the manor

The high lord of this domain was next on mine scroll. He did ken my powerful reputation and didst offer me a kidnap job. It wouldst take 19 'game days' to travel there, and he didst offer me but 90 gold for the task. 90 gold, I almost cried, 90 pieces of gold for such a time-consuming quest? Alas, being 'strapped of cash' I deemed it necessary to undertake the job. We did got a deal.

Continental map

Activating mine continental map, I selected the location and went there with all swiftness. My craven fool, who had contracted the pox from a rat's bite, died en route. The idiot should have visited a temple and been healed before travelling.

Quest

Ah, this quest has manifested into something more difficult. A dungeon awaits my exploration, as do numerous goblins, rats and guard entities. The deep crevasses are there to lure the unwitting adventurer to his doom. They're also there to annoy anyone with a slow unmanoeuvrable machine (486SX or less).

systems, right down to some of the keyboard shortcuts. You have a playing area and a mouse pointer. Moving the pointer up the screen and holding the left button moves you forward: the higher up, the faster you move. Right-click when moving to jump. Slide the pointer to the upper sides of the screen and you rotate sluggishly. Middle left and right side-steps you, while the bottom area moves you back. With the sword drawn, holding left and dragging up, across or down forces a stab, slice or chop manoeuvre. Frequenters of Lady Underworld's boudoir will also find the swimming and automap scribbling systems remarkably similar.

Arena's other major influence is *Legends Of Valour*, an ambitious attempt at rendering a fully interactive city, with the taverns, guilds and sub-quests which *Arena* concentrates on. *Legends*' 3D system was quite pleasant (based on *Wolfenstein*'s) but the playing area was too big, the controls too complicated and the gameplay too directionless. You spent more time trying to earn money and buy equipment than actually fighting, questing, exploring and doing the stuff the best RPGs throw at you.

And this, alas, is one of the biggest problems with *Arena*. Unfortunately, it's just one of many.

On the engine

Arena seems to be using the *Terminator Rampage* 3D engine (anyone who's trudged through *Rampage*'s jerky corridors will groan). The good news is that it's faster. The bad news is that it's not that much faster. Turning the detail down pixellates the fringes of the screen, but you'll need a 486/33 before it reaches a near bearable speed. You can't shrink the playing screen, or remove the floors or ceilings to hurry things up. When you walk, you edge forward. Try a quick roundhouse and three seconds later you may have managed it. If you've got a small cache on your machine, entering areas of the map, investigating your inventory, or saving/restoring a game will trigger two to 15 second delays. This whole slow-poke feel affects the entire pace of the game.

On the look

The graphics are good, if a little inconsistent. While the character generation

graphics are poop (heads not super-imposed properly, badly drawn backdrops and so on), the in-game aesthetics are top-notch. The outside locations may look garish by day but, come the night or misty weather, they look lovely and highly atmospheric. The dungeons' interiors are pleasant enough, but don't expect any of *Underworld*'s architec-





tural finesse, though. *Arena's* maps are distinctly blocky. Most of the animated people are horrible. Badly-drawn and coloured, they look like *Star Wars* figures which have been too close to an infra-red bar heater. The spells are probably the best-looking and most pyrotechnic of any RPG, some are not dissimilar to (try: exactly the same as) the *Rampage* explosions.

On combat

Combat is okay. There's plenty of blood and animation frames, but the arthritic engine takes away the sense of pace and excitement in the battles. And how do you know if your opponent is close to death? *Shadowcaster* had this problem and it was a pain. If you don't know where you stand after minutes of hacking away at a goblin, how do you know when to run away?

And why can't you look down? You get attacked. It's dark. The screen judders. But where's your assailant? Between your feet and totally 'out of frame'. And don't think hiding behind a door will protect you - even the rats in this game can open doors.

Get assailed from behind and you're in real trouble. Turning is achingly slow, and it's a two to one bet that Monsieur Goblin will have diced your spine before you've revolved even 90 degrees.

On the map

If you discover a tavern, or guild or whatever, the map will automatically label it for you. Nice feature, apart from when you find two places next to each other. Then both place names overlap into an unreadable mess, forcing you to delete both names and retype them on different levels.

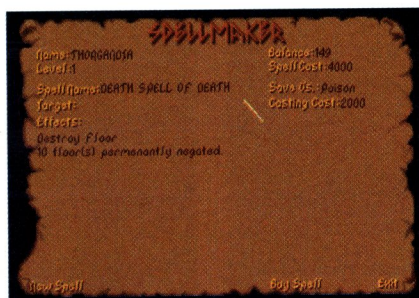
The cities and towns are packed with houses and locations. But trying to open most doors yields the message: 'This lock has nothing to fear from you,' so you can't get in. Does that mean you'll be able to get in at a later date? Or is this message the interactive equivalent of the classic 'You can't do that' reply.

There are loads of Tardis-style buildings with hallways and rooms which couldn't possibly fit. And each pub, guild and palace's interior is exactly the same - no

matter which pub, which town, which province. Why? How hard could it be to vary the interiors just a little bit? With this kind of monotony the incentive to explore other locations is lost.

On interaction

When you talk to any character you're fobbed off with such lame replies that you get bored. You do occasionally - I suppose as in life - meet an interesting person who'll sketch a location on a map or tell you a decent rumour or piece of gossip. But mostly the next person will say: 'Hey big boy, I don't do elves' (she's a prostitute you see), and the next 'I'm a stone mason. I fix stones'. After a while, you begin to find this very tedious.



On balance

Arena: The Elder Scrolls is disappointing. The cities are dull. The interaction is dull. The playing area is too large. The quests and money-earning too laborious. There's no wit. The over-serious storyline is the kind of 'thee, thou, forsooth' sub-Tolkien crap you get in your average fantasy novel. The graphics are inconsistent, the engine badly implemented and too slow. The overall objective, the most important thing in an RPG, the feeling that there's some great mystery to unlock, is obscured by the size and repetitive complexity of the design. The combat is flawed, small details are passed over and dungeons are puzzleless and boring. There's no pace, little atmosphere, few incentives and, overall, absolutely no fun. Sorry. Back to the luscious embrace of *Madame Underworld* I'm afraid. ☹

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SCORE

Disappointing, really.

(Above left) Fee-fi-fo-fum I smell the blood of a elf with a newsreader's haircut and a silly Zorro eye mask.
(Below left) A clever feature of *Arena* is designing your own spells.

Minimum Memory: 2Mb EMS:

Minimum Processor: 386

Hard Disk Space Required: 21Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA, SVGA

Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro 16, Pro Audio Spectrum 16, Gravis Ultrasound, Ensoniq Soundscape, Aria Chip Set

Controls Supported: Mouse and keyboard.

Comments: It's much too slow on a 486SX and not exactly speedy on a DX. Cacheing system like SMARTDRV is essential.

Price: £45.99 **Publisher:** US Gold/Bethesda

Release Date: Out now **Tel:** 021 625 3388

IN PERSPECTIVE

Arena: Elder Scrolls

Betrayal At Krondor

Eye Of The Beholder

Lands Of Lore

Legends Of Valour

Shadowcaster

Terminator Rampage

Ultima Underworld I

Ultima Underworld II

Worlds Of Legend

STARLORD



Chris Anderson has always been a bit of a space cadet. Sadly, his last attempt to launch himself spacewards resulted in a short stay at the local hospital. We sent him *Starlord* to review in an attempt to keep him earthbound – for a while.



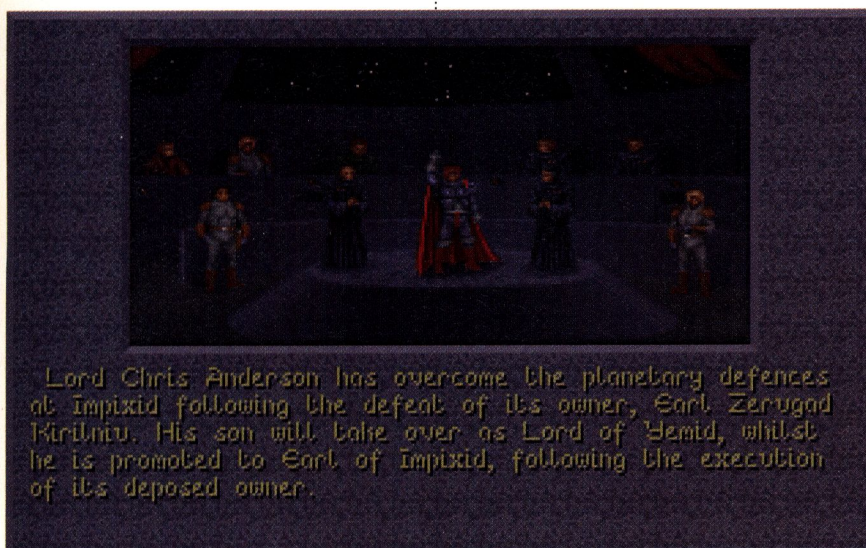
HERE ARE NOW almost as many space trading games for the PC as there are stars in the galaxy. Hardly a month goes by without another one or two popping up, proudly claiming to be fab, brill and oodles better than all the other ones. Invariably, they're not. They all seem to get most things right and one vital element or other horribly wrong. Either the gameplay is crap, and the combat is great or the gameplay is great and the interface is crap or any other combination of stupid mistakes.

And it's not as though programmers haven't got any examples to work with. A zillion space trading games have already

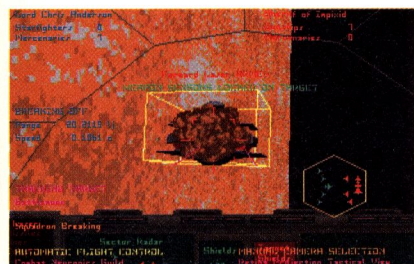
digitised speech for all the characters as in, er, some game that has loads of digitised speech, and the entire musical score from *Wing Commander* (alright, I know there's no space trading in it, but it's my imaginary game so I'll have whatever music I like wobbling in the background, okay?).

There! That wasn't too difficult, was it? I now fully expect zillions of letters from software houses begging me to design their next space trading game. I won't do it, though. It's much easier (and much, much more fun) to wait for it to come in for review and then tell them how they should have done it. But back to *Starlord*...

Use your battle map to plan your strategy.



(Above) Who would have believed it, I'm an earl.
(Below) Go on in and beat him up.



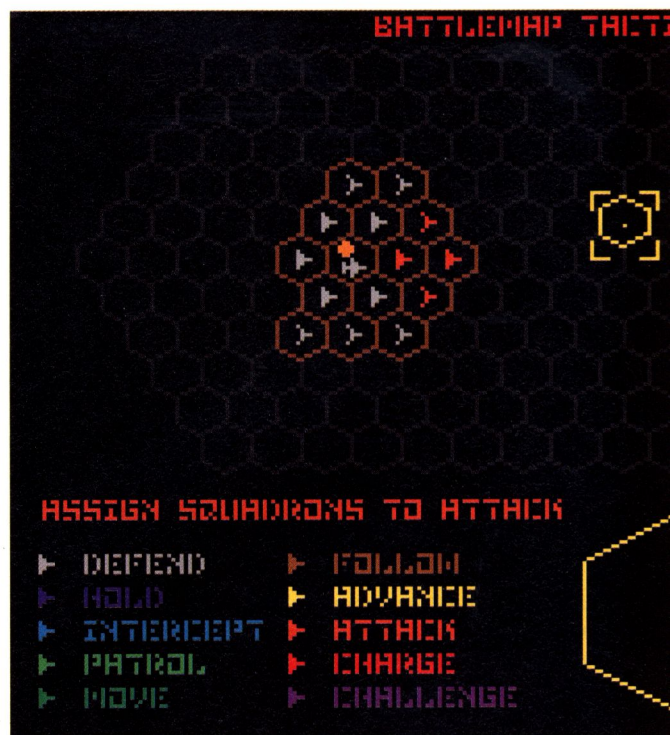
'Starlord's just another trading game. It's a shame, it could have been so much better.'

got one thing or other completely right or completely wrong, so why is it so difficult for any software house to come up with the perfect example of the genre?

Let's delve into the realms of fantasy for a minute or two and play the 'If I were to design a space trading masterpiece...' game and see if we can come up with the goods, shall we? You can substitute my choice of combat style with your own fave seeing as how it always appears to be such a controversial subject.

DIY corner

So, if I were to design a space trading game... I would happily run around plagiarising everything in sight to come up with a perfect product. My space trading combat masterpiece would have the gameplay and complexity of *Frontier Elite 2*; the charm and massive scope for sub-plot upon sub-plot of *Nomad*; the tense, exciting (and graphically stunning) combat scenes from *Privateer*; the extra realism of having



In the beginning

The background for *Starlord* is typical of what you might expect from a space trading game, in as much as it's unnecessarily complex. What it basically boils down to is this. Mankind went exploring the Galaxy. Mankind found lots of little planets and colonised them. Mankind put lots of different space bods (starlords) on these planets who promptly began to scrap with each other over worries like who owned what planet, who had the sexiest spaceship and who was the cleverest of them all etc. Now mankind is in an even worse mess than it was before they started.

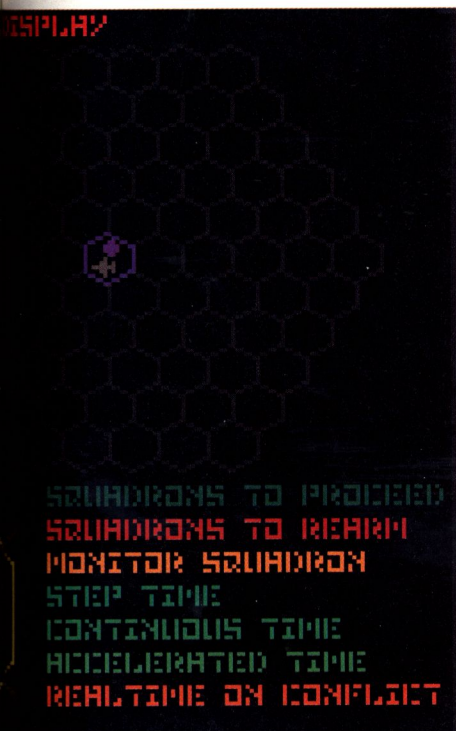
You are a starlord. Your ultimate goal is to become emperor of the galaxy. To achieve this you have to go out and bully all the other starlords, call them nasty names and then show them who's boss by booting



them off their planets. Simple enough stuff, though you wouldn't think so if you took the time to read the background section of the manual.

Social ladder climbing

If you choose to play the simplest scenario for *Starlord*, you start life as a lord. This is the lowest ranking of all the starlords. The only way to improve your status is by defeating a starlord of higher ranking and pinching his base star. A lord who defeats an earl becomes an earl. The same applies from earl to duke, duke to king and eventually, king to emperor.



To defeat a starlord of higher rank, all you have to do is go to his base with loads more fighter ships than him, insult him to provoke him into a fight and then blow all his ships up. At the start of the game, this is relatively easy. It's no problem for a lord to defeat an earl because earls just aren't very powerful. But it gets much harder to win the higher up the rankings you go. If you want to take on a king, for example, you'll need hundreds of starfighters and mercenary ships. To get these, you'll need money, and plenty of it. That means you'll have to do lots of what comes naturally to anyone who has played this type of game before - trading. The old 'buy stuff for peanuts and sell it for a fortune' game.

The obligatory trading bit

If you want to become a successful trader in *Starlord*, you've got to know your stars.



There's nothing like a good, fair fight. And this is nothing like...

IN PERSPECTIVE

Frontier Elite 2 is still the best all-round bet for space trading fans. In a sector of the PC games market that's full of 'nearly-got-it-rights,' its addictive gameplay and enormous game environment puts it a cut above the rest.

Frontier Elite 2

Privateer

Nomad

StarLord

Protostar

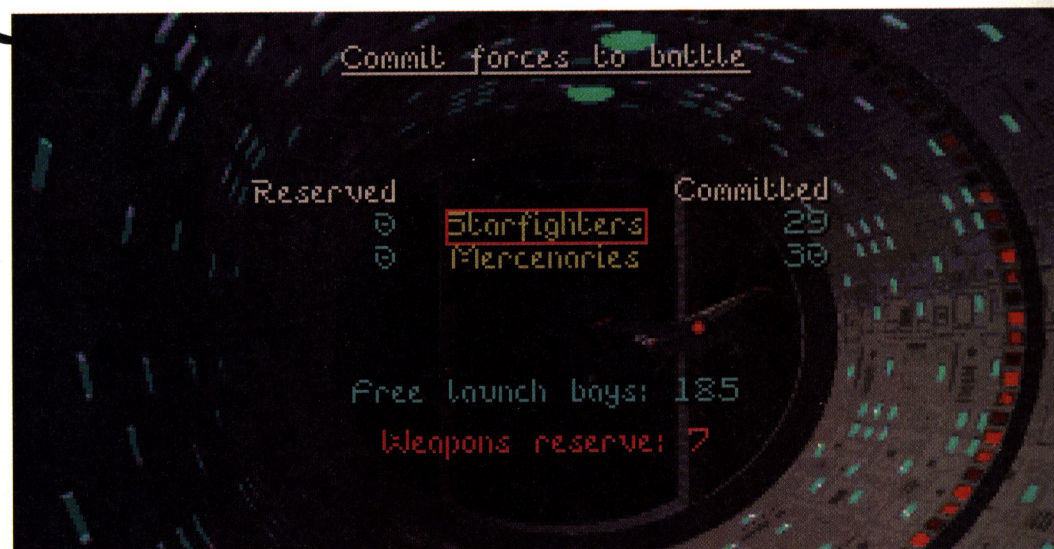
Commit your forces to battle. I think I'll bring the lot.

Every starlord has their own base star which they use as an HQ. What type of star you inhabit depends on your ranking. Lords inhabit production stars. Each time you go up a rank, you will be rewarded with a flashy new residence, starting with a castle star and moving up to a city star, citadel star and, if you're really lucky, the rather smart-sounding throne star.

For trading purposes, the only ones that matter are production stars, since they're the only ones that sell anything. Once you've found out where they are and what they sell, you just go zipping about the galaxy, buying and selling everything like a mad person until you eventually end up with an enormous amount of cash. So, once you've got this mother of a wad together, what do you do with it? Simple! You buy as many starfighters and mercenary ships as you can possibly afford and fly around beating the living daylight out of everyone.

The obligatory combat bit

Battle sequences in space trading games are usually pretty goddamn awful. You look at some of them and wonder how on earth



Who nicked all the screens?

Starlord doesn't have nearly as many screens as your average space trading/combat affair. And of those, there are only a few are of any importance. Still, it's better than nothing, I suppose. Here they are, along with a few totally useless ones.

1 The Library screen.

From here you can access information on any *starlord* in the Galactic Empire. This helps you decide who you should trade with and who you should battle against.

2 The Base Star Screen.

This gives you general info on your base star and its resources. If it's a production star, you have to make sure it always has enough resources or it produces nothing and you don't make any loot.

3 The Trading Screen.

This is where you buy and sell stuff, of course. You can buy all your starfighters, mercenary ships and weapons here before going into battle.

4 The Player Screen.

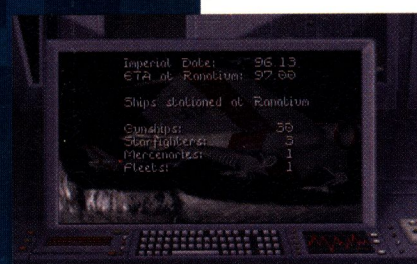
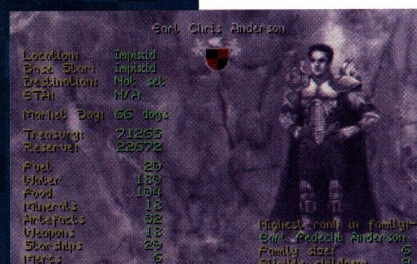
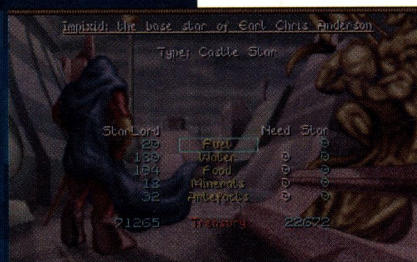
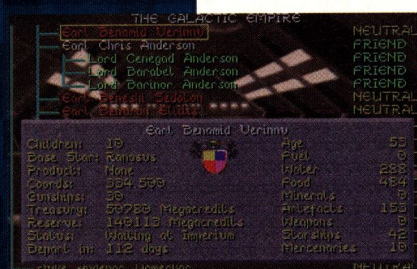
This screen shows you a picture of yourself and tells you stuff you already know, like how much money and resources you've got and how well your family's doing.

5 The Passage of Time Screen.

When you are travelling, this screen occasionally tells you of important events you can't do anything about because you're travelling.

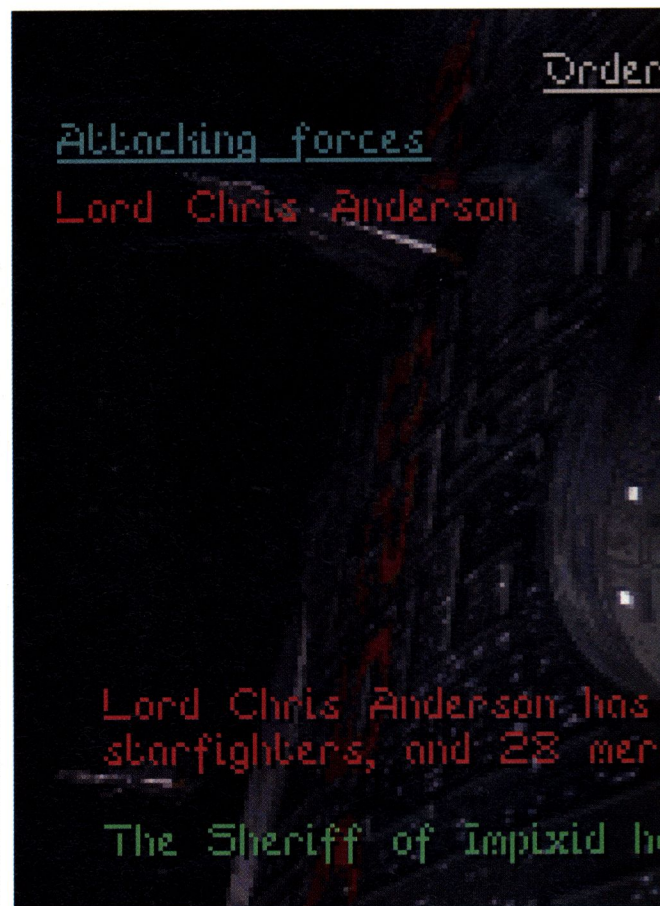
6 The Hanging About Screen.

The rest of the time you are travelling you just stare at this and get completely bored. I only put this in because I couldn't find any more screens.



First things first. Find somebody wimpy to pick on.

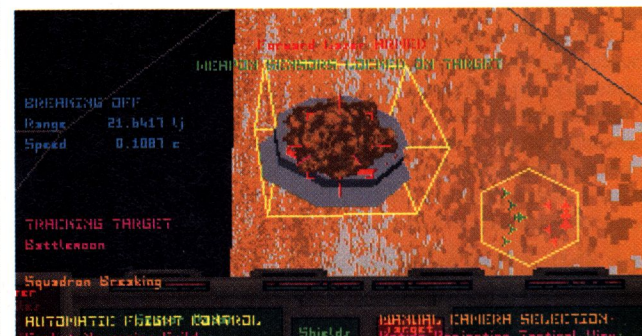
anyone could produce something so tacky and uninspiring. I have my own theory on this. In my mind's eye I can see a games designer who suddenly remembers at the last minute that his game was supposed to have a combat bit in it somewhere. He phones the programmer and says: 'Shit, we forgot the combat bit and we're only a



(Above) Hang on a minute, the sheriff's coming to help the earl. (Below) A knuckle dusting looks to be in order.

week away from release date. Just churn out any old crap and we'll put it in.'

When I first saw the combat section in *Starlord* I was amazed. Decent graphics for the combat bit? It surely can't be true, I thought. It is though. The graphics have an

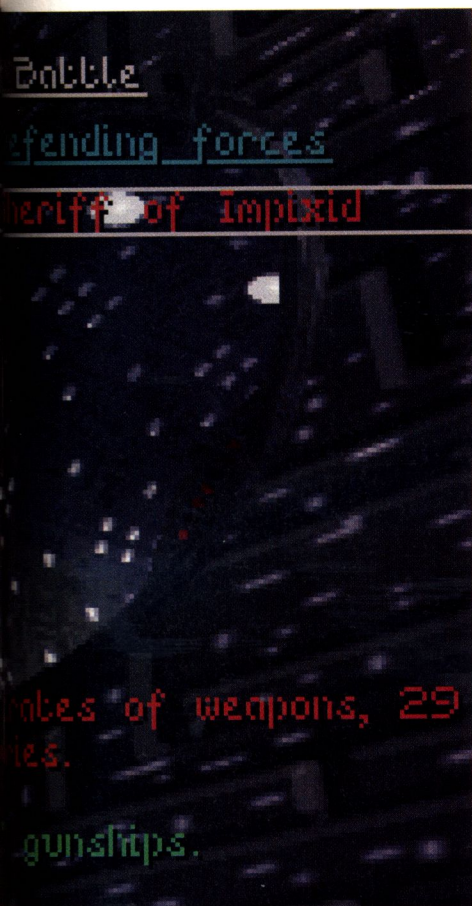


atmospheric, *Frontier: Elite 2* feel to them, and there are several neat camera angles from which to view the action. As soon as you jump into the action, all your starfighters and mercenary ships zoom about scrapping with the enemy ships while you control your own battle fighter and home in on your opponent's capital ship. It all looks so exciting and tense and smart and utterly fab. This is just too good to be true, I thought.

Unfortunately, I was right.

First impressions don't count

So here we are, straight back to the 'getting most things right and one thing horribly wrong' problem. It's not the graphics, it's not the atmosphere, it's not even the gameplay during the battles, which isn't exactly gripping but would have sufficed.



No, MicroProse has managed to come up with a completely new reason to hate battle sections in space trading games instead. And look, here it is!

Your objective when you go into battle is to destroy the enemy starlord's capital ship. If you blow that up, you win the battle.

That wouldn't be too much of a problem if it wasn't for the fact that the bastard thing takes about four or five hundred hits before it blows up. That means you have to spend hours and hours pounding away at the same ship before the damn stupid thing explodes.

As you can imagine, this becomes a trifle boring after about ten or 15 minutes. The only way to avoid this is to take the quick result option before the battle begins. The computer then decides who wins based on

the amount of ships each side has and how heavy duty they are, so you don't get to fight any battles at all.

So there are your choices. You can either take part in battles that go on forever, or just skip them completely. In reality, there's only really one choice.

I can't honestly see anyone going through these never-ending battles every time they meet someone who wants a scrap, which is virtually every time you come to a new planet. So now we have yet another space trading/combat game without the combat bits. Oh well.

Family connections

If there's one thing this game is big on, it's families. The most powerful starlords are the ones who can rely on their relatives to help them out. They give you stuff cheap, help you out in scraps, and are generally nice to you in every way.

It sometimes feels like a sort of *Neighbours* in space. Every time you successfully take over a base star, one of



(Main below) Say something rotten to them to wind them up and start a fight.



your family members is installed as the new ruling starlord. Each time you visit that base star afterwards, you can trade with them and buy whatever commodity the star produces at reduced cost. Your family also come running to help you if you are fighting a battle and they are within one jump of the area you are in.

If you stay at the same rank for long enough and keep attacking base stars with the same rank as you, you will soon end up with loads of aunts, uncles, cousins and other family-type people hanging about all over the place.

There are distinct advantages to this. You can set up your own family trade circle and avoid dealing with unscrupulous traders completely. If your family becomes large enough, (aka the Beales in *EastEnders*) your family hierarchy will override the Galactic hierarchy. Generally, being nice to your relatives is a good idea, no matter how many pairs of dodgy socks they buy you every Christmas.

Par for the course

Without the battles, *Starlord* is just another buy, sell, upgrade and win game. It's a shame, because it really could have been so much better.

Apart from the battles, there's another vital element missing which could have saved the day had it been included – a plot. *Starlord* has no plot or storyline whatsoever – which is hard to fathom, since Mike Singleton, the man responsible for the classic strategy game *Midwinter*, had a part in programming and designing this game. Most of his games to date have been very strong on character development and interaction. In comparison *Starlord* feels a bit aimless. All the game tells you is you have to go around conquering bases and sticking members of your family on them. Once you've conquered enough bases and climbed the social ladder you become emperor and win but, without any vague hint of a storyline to keep you hooked on the way, I doubt if anyone will have the patience to see it through to the end. **Z**

70

SCORE

It could have been excellent. Could have been. Damn!

Minimum Memory: 2Mb

Minimum Processor: 386/25MHz

Installation: Essential

Hard Disk Space Required: 7.4 Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Roland, Sound Blaster

Controls: Mouse, Joystick

Price: £44.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: MicroProse

Telephone: 0454 326532





Turning Up Trumps

PC ZONE'S UNIQUE GUIDE TO CLASSIC GAMES ON THE PC

You may have had Cars. You may have had Spaceships. You may have had Aeroplanes. You could even have played Chocolate Bar Top Trumps ('My sugar level is 25g per 100 - I win'). But David McCandless bets you've never played PC Game Top Trumps (And never will. Ed.)

THE MOST annoying thing about the current boom in the video games movement is the general view adopted by glossy mags and 'meejah' types that Nintendo and Sega games are the landmarks of computer entertainment. You know the type of thing: 'Video games are,' they spout, 'like, so new and revolutionary yah?' or 'This Sega game is the most incredibly original game ever'. We stare, wide-eyed and incredulous when people turn to us and say: 'StarWing is unbelievable. A wire-framed graphicked space arcade game - it's amazing.' Er, StarGlider? Carrier Command? Star Wars? Elite? Anybody heard of these? Even such recent PC yardsticks like X-Wing get swept under the carpet when a third generation, not-as-playable derivative like StarWing rampages across magazine covers throughout the globe.

Even when *Wolfenstein 3D* gets ported over to the SNES, we get the 'Revolutionary; original as sin' comments, even though we were playing it about 70 years ago and have since moved onto *Doom* (which, incidentally, I'd like to see a SNES do even a bad impression of).

Okay, perhaps this delivery is swimming in a pint too much bile and spleen, but the point is clear: historical context is everything. If you're going to fork out 40-odd quid on a game, you'll want to know if this game is one of the better examples of its genre or just a sad, pale, wrinkly imitation of the best bits of a seminal classic which nobody sells anymore. For instance, if you play *Terminator Rampage* without having seen *Wolfenstein 3D* or *Doom*, you're going to think it's pretty excellent. But a quick glance at either of its contemporaries and you may be a little upset with your purchase.

So here is a witty and accessible way of getting your own back against those false Sega prophets and myopic Nintendo pariahs. Glance at our list of the most seminal PC games ever and learn the historical and socio-political context of today's releases. Constantly referred to in the 'In Perspective' box in our reviews, these games will profoundly affect today's and tomorrow's releases. Or, if you're so inclined, cut out the little cards and play Top Trumps with your favourite pal.

The rules

The game is simple. You deal the cards after shuffling them comprehensively. Share the pack between you and your

trump-chum and you are ready to begin. In turn, each player examines their first card and calls out a statistic. Whatever you do, remember that this is not a card game, nor a game of luck - it is psychological warfare. If you have a crap card, behave as though you have a very good card. If you have a good card, you try to lull your partner into a false sense of security. You call out an attribute of your card and your opponent calls out his. If your one is higher, you win. Of course, you lie continuously:
Player 1: Yeah well right. Number of levels 80. Ha! Beat that.

Player 2: Er... number of levels?

Player 1: Yeah, 80. Come on I win.

Player 2: As in one above 79 levels?

Player 1: Yeah, come on hand it over.

Player 2: My level count is er... 2000.

Player 1: Hey I don't believe you. Which game have you got.

Player 2: Oh dear I've mysteriously dropped and muddled up the whole pack. Damn.

The person who has no cards left loses.

THE RATINGS

HOURS OF PLAY: number of sheer man hours you could milk from this game if it was a Sunday and all your friends had died.

NO. OF LEVELS/SCREENS: number of different locations, missions, or difficulty levels, or whatever.

GRAPHICS: mark out of ten for the revolutionary-ness of the graphics.

GAMEPLAY: mark out of ten for the depth of the gameplay.

ADDICTIVENESS: mark out of ten for the compulsive-factor of said classic.

PC ZONE RATING: the mark we gave it when we reviewed it, or the mark we would have given it had we reviewed it.

SEMINALITY: a rating for the influence this game has had on gamesdom.

INFLUENCED: titles this game has inspired over the years. The more the better.



ALONE IN THE DARK



REMARKABLE for its smooth polygon 'people', pioneering use of camera views to give a filmic feel, and overall scary gothic atmosphere. *Alone In*

The Dark is an unequalled classic arcade adventure. It's hard too.

HOURS OF PLAY	20
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	45 locations
GRAPHICS	9
GAMEPLAY	7
ADDICTIVENESS	7
PC ZONE RATING	90
SEMINALITY	6
INFLUENCED	Alone In The Dark II, Shadow Of The Comet
PRICE	£49.99
PUBLISHER.....	Infogrames

ANOTHER WORLD



FILMIC construction, excellent plot, not unhard arcade sequences and broad stripes of atmosphere mark this rather unsung polygon-based game as a

distant but weird (it's French) classic.

HOURS OF PLAY	20
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	30 sections
GRAPHICS	8
GAMEPLAY	7
ADDICTIVENESS	8
PC ZONE RATING	89
SEMINALITY	5
INFLUENCED	Flashback
PRICE	£14.99
PUBLISHER.....	Delphine/US Gold

CIVILISATION



THE first strategy game to combine hexagonal heritage, God Sim and futuristic scenario. The functional graphics are a bit of a let-down, but the two-player or

versus-computer gameplay, and randomised levels provide almost limitless possibilities.

HOURS OF PLAY	Infinite
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	Infinite
GRAPHICS	3
GAMEPLAY	9
ADDICTIVENESS	9
PC ZONE RATING	92
SEMINALITY	8
INFLUENCED	Megalomania, Powermonger, Utopia etc
PRICE	£39.99
PUBLISHER.....	MicroProse

CHESSMASTER 2100



THE most seminal chess game ever. To wit: annotated boards, context-sensitive help, ability to edit opponents. The whole 64 squares. Makes

Nigel Short play like a turnip. Buy it damn you!

HOURS OF PLAY	Infinite
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	100
GRAPHICS	6
GAMEPLAY	8
ADDICTIVENESS	10
PC ZONE RATING	90
SEMINALITY	8
INFLUENCED	Battle Chess, CM 3000, Kasparov's Gambit
PRICE	£35.99
PUBLISHER	Mindscape

CHUCK YEAGER'S AIR COMBAT



A MUCH unnoticed flight sim, which invented a whole range of precedents for sims. The first to allow set-ups of dogfights, two-player link-up, convex

peripherals, and a Fun Fun Fun combat system. Old Chuck's a bit of a dick, though.

HOURS OF PLAY	Infinite
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	56 missions
GRAPHICS	6
GAMEPLAY	9
ADDICTIVENESS	9
PC ZONE RATING	90
SEMINALITY	8
INFLUENCED	Dogfight
PRICE	£14.99
PUBLISHER.....	Hit Squad/Ocean

DOOM



RECENT but still as seminal as it is incredible. *Doom's* ultra-fast 3D graphics system and unrelenting gameplay has set a new, nigh-on

unbeatable precedent for arcade games. A classic of gargantuan proportions.

HOURS OF PLAY	40
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	27 big levels
GRAPHICS	10
GAMEPLAY	9
ADDICTIVENESS	10
PC ZONE RATING	96
SEMINALITY	10
INFLUENCED	Unique
PRICE	£34.95
PUBLISHER	ID

DUNGEON MASTER



THE grandfather of all RPGs really. Started the flick-screen graphics system but wrapped it up in the best-designed and most challenging

dungeon of all time. No joke. It's six years old and still the best.

HOURS OF PLAY	50
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	14
GRAPHICS	5
GAMEPLAY	7
ADDICTIVENESS	9
PC ZONE RATING	91
SEMINALITY	10
INFLUENCED	Dungeon Hack, EOTB, Lands Of Lore
PRICE	£34.99
PUBLISHER.....	Psygnosis

ELITE PLUS



MUCH sung, much fun. Never known a space trading/combat game like it. Zillions of stars, the Blue Danube, military lasers and a bit of a docking

experience. A nostalgia freak's wet dream.

HOURS OF PLAY	10000
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	500,000 systems
GRAPHICS	5
GAMEPLAY	7
ADDICTIVENESS	8
PC ZONE RATING	81
SEMINALITY	10
INFLUENCED	Elite 2, Privateer, Star Control 2, X-Wing
PRICE	Available on Space Legends compilation £34.99
PUBLISHER	Empire

FALCON 3.0

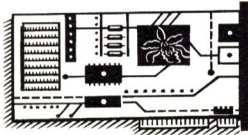


NOT entirely original, but took elements from previous games and improved them ten-fold, namely the speedy adrenalin-based combat system

and the now legendary Padlock view. *Falcon 4.0* should be even better.

HOURS OF PLAY	25
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	30 missions
GRAPHICS	5
GAMEPLAY	7
ADDICTIVENESS	7
PC ZONE RATING	80
SEMINALITY	9
INFLUENCED	AV8B, MIG-29, F15 Strike Eagle III, Tornado
PRICE	£44.99
PUBLISHER	MicroProse/Spectrum Holobyte

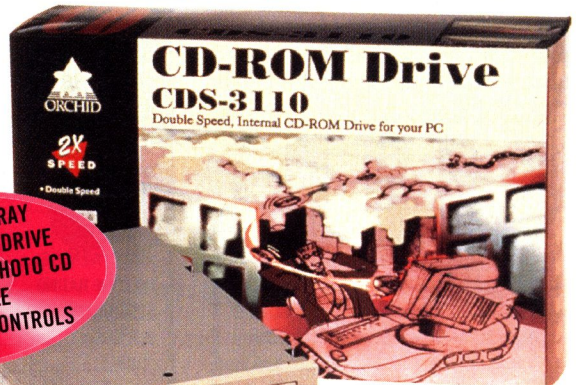
TAKE ON THE BEST



Since its launch last year Orchid SoundWave 32 has proved such a hip hit - sending the computer press ecstatically overboard, and blasting its way straight to the top!



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Now to help you get the most from your system we've brought onboard our double-speed **CDS-3110 CD-ROM Drive**. With a smooth, rapid real-time transfer rate of 300KB per second and front panel controls, for less than £150 it even lets you rave to audio CDs!

What's more, we've teamed SoundWave 32 with the CDS-3110 to create the ultimate MPC Level II-compatible **Multimedia Upgrade Kit**, which we're not the first to admit, at around £300, sounds fantastic: *PC Today* has already named us 'Best multimedia company 1993'!

So if you like the sound of success, forget the rest, call (0256) 817722 now, and take on the best!

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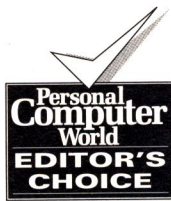
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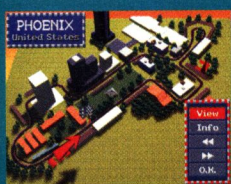
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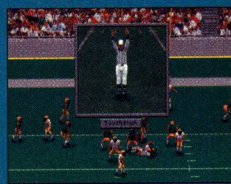
FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX



TOOK *Indy 500* for a quick spin and came back with arguably the most playable driving sim in the universe. Two-player link-up, 16 tracks and wall-to-wall realism. Programmed by Geoff Crammond.

HOURS OF PLAY	.....100
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....16 tracks
GRAPHICS	.....9
GAMEPLAY	.....8
ADDICTIVENESS	.....8
PC ZONE RATING	.....92
SEMINALITY	.....5
INFLUENCED	.....IndyCar Racing
PRICE	.....£44.99
PUBLISHER	.....MicroProse

FPS FOOTBALL PRO



IF YOU understand this game, then you need to buy this sim. Design your own plays, two-player option, realism, grunts and graphics – anything else?

HOURS OF PLAY	.....100
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....Infinite
GRAPHICS	.....9
GAMEPLAY	.....8
ADDICTIVENESS	.....8
PC ZONE RATING	.....90
SEMINALITY	.....3
INFLUENCED	.....Best of genre
PRICE	.....£39.99
PUBLISHER	.....Sierra/Dynamix

HONG KONG MAH-JONG PRO



DIGITISED Chinese people opponents, loads of variations, thought required and simply the best.

HOURS OF PLAY	.....Infinite
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....8 opponents
GRAPHICS	.....9
GAMEPLAY	.....9
ADDICTIVENESS	.....9
PC ZONE RATING	.....90
SEMINALITY	.....6
INFLUENCED	.....Unique
PRICE	.....£29.99
PUBLISHER	.....Electronic Arts

INDY & THE FATE OF ATLANTIS



MULTIPLE characters, excellent story-driven plot, three different playing modes and, above all, very well directed. There's fabulous graphics to boot. The yardstick for all adventures.

HOURS OF PLAY	.....30
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....100
GRAPHICS	.....8
GAMEPLAY	.....8
ADDICTIVENESS	.....9
PC ZONE RATING	.....93
SEMINALITY	.....9
INFLUENCED	.....Tentacle, Legend Of Kyrandia, Sam And Max
PRICE	.....£37.99
PUBLISHER	.....LucasArts/US Gold

INDIANAPOLIS 500



OLD and very limited racing sim which, nevertheless, provided the backbone for *Formula One* and *IndyCar*. The first game with hundreds and thousands for audiences and the freedom to go the wrong way around the tracks.

HOURS OF PLAY	.....5
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....1
GRAPHICS	.....6
GAMEPLAY	.....7
ADDICTIVENESS	.....7
PC ZONE RATING	.....85
SEMINALITY	.....10
INFLUENCED	.....Days Of Thunder, F1GP, IndyCar
PRICE	.....£14.99
PUBLISHER	.....Hit Squad/Ocean

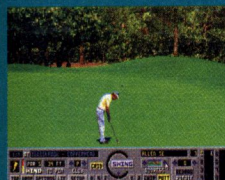
LEMMINGS



HORDES of furry bipeds strolling headlong across treacherous booby-trapped screens with only you and your mouse pointer to save them. Brain-bendingly tricky and humorous save 'em-up; spawner of a thousand imitations (well, four).

HOURS OF PLAY	.....100
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....80 levels
GRAPHICS	.....6
GAMEPLAY	.....9
ADDICTIVENESS	.....9
PC ZONE RATING	.....92
SEMINALITY	.....9
INFLUENCED	.....Humans, Fury Of The Furries, Trudlers
PRICE	.....£34.99
PUBLISHER	.....Psygnosis

LINKS 386 PRO



THE first golf game to go for realism in a big way. You get a digitised player with scaled and digitised backdrops, and more satanic add-on golf courses than you can swing a nine-iron at. Corny description, great game.

HOURS OF PLAY	.....Infinite
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....17
GRAPHICS	.....8
GAMEPLAY	.....7
ADDICTIVENESS	.....7
PC ZONE RATING	.....90
SEMINALITY	.....5
INFLUENCED	.....David Leadbetter's Golf, Jack Nicklaus
PRICE	.....£45.99
PUBLISHER	.....Access/US Gold

POPULOUS



WHAT can you say eh? The most influential God Sim of all time. Sent Bullfrog into the big time and caused rashes of computer widows all over the country. Quite unbelievably absorbing.

HOURS OF PLAY	.....50
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....1000 islands
GRAPHICS	.....7
GAMEPLAY	.....8
ADDICTIVENESS	.....9
PC ZONE RATING	.....90
SEMINALITY	.....9
INFLUENCED	.....Civilisation, Populous 2, Powermonger, Utopia
PRICE	.....£14.99
PUBLISHER	.....Hit Squad/Ocean

PRINCE OF PERSIA



THE first game to digitise an actor and force him into sprite form for fluid animation. Tack on a few puzzle-orientated levels, tricky leaps and 'skellingtons', and you've got the classic mould for the classic platformer.

HOURS OF PLAY	.....20
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	.....12 big levels
GRAPHICS	.....8
GAMEPLAY	.....9
ADDICTIVENESS	.....9
PC ZONE RATING	.....90
SEMINALITY8
INFLUENCEDFlashback
PRICE£12.99
PUBLISHERHit Squad/Ocean

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RED BARON



THE venerable old codger of the flight sim world still packs a punch. Not the first WW1 sim, but certainly the most playable. Has the clever second

button pseudo-padlock view, and full VCR functions with punch-in-at-any point ability.

HOURS OF PLAY	50
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	80
GRAPHICS	7
GAMEPLAY	8
ADDICTIVENESS	9
PC ZONE RATING	88
SEMINALITY	7
INFLUENCED	Aces Over Europe, SWOTL
PRICE	£39.99
PUBLISHER	Dynamix

SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

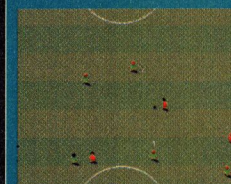


THE first (and some might say, last) funny adventure. Triggered a whole range of imitations – none really equalling its wit, puzzles, excellent

cartoony graphics and unrivalled use of the now proprietary SCUMM system.

HOURS OF PLAY	30
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	75
GRAPHICS	7
GAMEPLAY	8
ADDICTIVENESS	9
PC ZONE RATING	92
SEMINALITY	9
INFLUENCED	Every other graphic adventure
PRICE	£16.99
PUBLISHER	Kixx XL

SENSIBLE SOCCER



NOT as hot poop as its version for other computers, but still, you can't beat a bit of two-player *Sensi*. No offside or complexity. Just a huge league

system and gameplay galore. Totally addictive.

HOURS OF PLAY	Infinite
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	64
GRAPHICS	7
GAMEPLAY	7
ADDICTIVENESS	8
PC ZONE RATING	80
SEMINALITY	9
INFLUENCED	Unbeaten
PRICE	£32.99
PUBLISHER	Renegade

SIM CITY



CAME out alongside *Populous* and never looked back. The premise: build cities and keep them going. The result: a very sore mouse hand.

HOURS OF PLAY	Infinite
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	8
GRAPHICS	7
GAMEPLAY	9
ADDICTIVENESS	9
PC ZONE RATING	91
SEMINALITY	10
INFLUENCED	Civilisation, Railroad Tycoon, Sim Ant, Sim Life
PRICE	£39.99
PUBLISHER	Maxis/Mindscape

SUPER TETRIS



IF YOU haven't played *Tetris* then you haven't lived. As geometric blocks pour remorselessly down the screen, you must flip, move and

tessellate them in rows to survive. Difficult and wonderfully addictive.

HOURS OF PLAY	40
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	Infinite
GRAPHICS	3
GAMEPLAY	7
ADDICTIVENESS	10
PC ZONE RATING	91
SEMINALITY	9
INFLUENCED	Clix, Columns, Blox, Klax, Welltris
PRICE	No longer available
PUBLISHER	Spectrum Holobyte

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD



THE first game to use texture-mapping and create a 'real world' feel with architecturally designed dungeons. Caverns, hallways, staircases,

pits and high-domed ceilings – the whole nine atmospheric yards. It still hasn't been beaten.

HOURS OF PLAY	35
NO OF LEVELS (SIZE)	9 big dungeons
GRAPHICS	8
GAMEPLAY	8
ADDICTIVENESS	10
PC ZONE RATING	91
SEMINALITY	9
INFLUENCED	Legends Of Valour, Shadowcaster, Wizard
PRICE	£39.99
PUBLISHER	Electronic Arts/Origin

WACKY FUNSTERS



OH DEAR. Oh dear. It's the 'Chump Trump'. The worst game of all time. It defies description. It's terrible.

HOURS OF PLAY	0
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	Irrelevant
GRAPHICS	3
GAMEPLAY	2
ADDICTIVENESS	1
PC ZONE RATING	35
SEMINALITY	0
INFLUENCED	Your dustbin men
PRICE	£19.99
PUBLISHER	Accolade

WOLFENSTEIN 3D



ONE of the first instances of texture-mapping and real-time sprite scrolling, this 3D combat game sent jaws dropping all over the world. Banned in

Australia for its ultra-violence, and emulated all over the globe, it's an utter classic.

HOURS OF PLAY	40
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	60 levels
GRAPHICS	7
GAMEPLAY	8
ADDICTIVENESS	8
PC ZONE RATING	92
SEMINALITY	10
INFLUENCED	All other 3D combat games
PRICE	£19.99
PUBLISHER	Software Toolworks

X-WING



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HOURS OF PLAY	30
NO. OF LEVELS (SIZE)	40 missions
GRAPHICS	8
GAMEPLAY	8
ADDICTIVENESS	8
PC ZONE RATING	88
SEMINALITY	6
INFLUENCED	Unique
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PUBLISHER	US Gold



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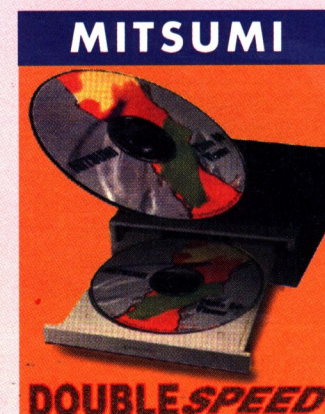
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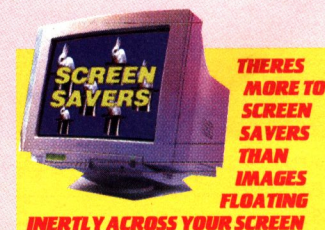
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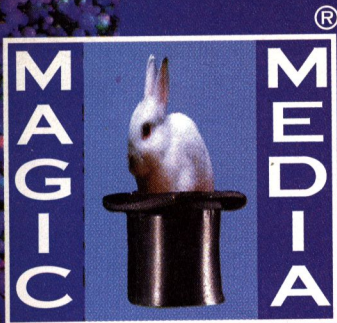
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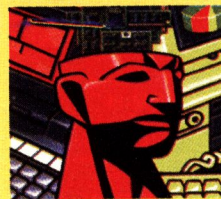
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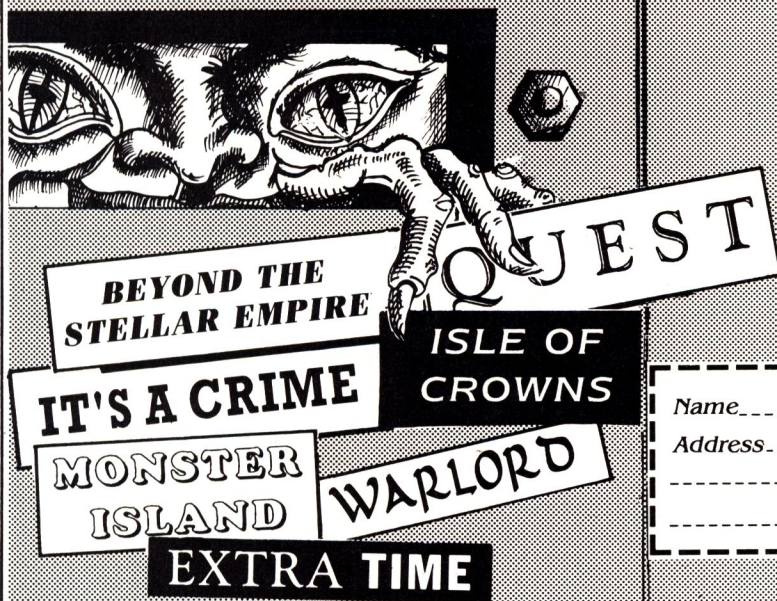
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PC

ZONE

CD-ROM

reviews

There are more games than ever before being produced either initially or only for CD-ROM these days and barely a major disk-based release goes by without a CD conversion following. The next 12 pages are devoted to the best the new medium has to offer, and as you'll see, the best is very good indeed.

T

HE GAMES in this section are subject to the same marking system as the disk-based games we review. You'll find a guide to our marks on page 41.

Games that score between 80 and 89% receive our Recommended award. Games that fall into this category are likely to appeal to you if you like that particular genre.

Games scoring over 90% are Classics. They redefine the state-of-the-art in computer games and most game players will thoroughly enjoy them regardless of their genre.

Naturally the In Perspective and Tech Specs boxes work in the same way, but

there are some other factors you need to take into account when purchasing CD-ROM games.

Drive Speed: Not all CD-ROM drives perform equally well, but generally they can be divided into types according to the sustained access speed. Older games will work quite happily on any drive, but most newer games will need a double-speed drive to function well, and as the year goes on some games will appear which demand triple-speed drives. To avoid disappointment, you should check that your drive speed is sufficient for the game you are about to buy.

Windows: Because Windows is an integral part of multimedia systems, many multimedia games are designed to run in

WHAT'S IN OUR DISK CADDIES?

Some games get played, reviewed and then lost. Others hang around a lot longer. This is what's currently monopolising our CD drive. Not necessarily the best games around, but the ones we keep coming back to.

Battle Isle 2

Gabriel Knight

Rebel Assault

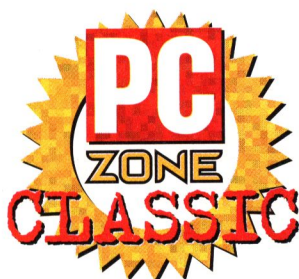
Return to Zork

Star Trek

this environment. Although most modern PCs are supplied with Windows, not all PCs are capable of running Windows very efficiently. You may find that some games run very slowly when running under Windows unless you have a Windows graphics accelerator. You can also speed up Windows graphics operation by adding more memory, which you should allocate as Extended rather than Expanded memory and setting up a large permanent virtual memory space on your hard drive. You should also not attempt to run other Windows applications concurrently with games as this will severely degrade their performance. Finally running Windows in enhanced mode will help to get your multimedia games up to speed.

MPC levels: True multimedia games may need to be run on a machine meeting a certain MPC level. Most multimedia games demand MPC level 2. As a rough guide, this is what's needed to meet MPC level 2: Double speed CD drive. 80386 33Mhz PC, 16-bit sound card, SVGA card and monitor, Windows 3.1.

Battle Isle 2



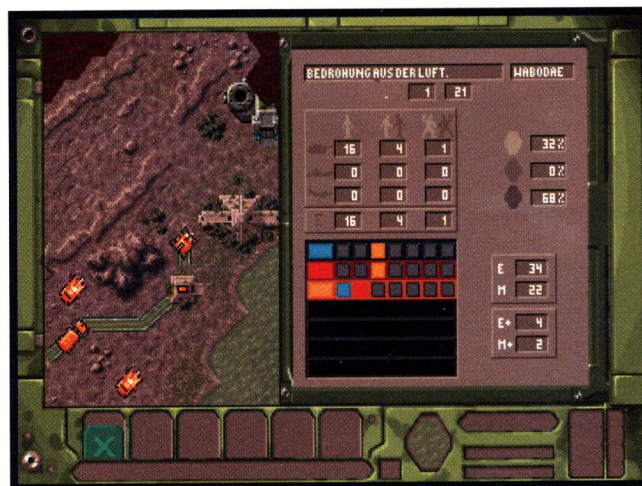
The most popular strategy game of recent years has been dragged kicking and screaming into the world of CD-ROM. **Laurence Scottford** puts it through its paces and sees whether, under its fancy new clothing, it has still got what it takes.

THE WORDS 'strategic', 'wargame' and 'hex-grid' have been known to send many game players heading rapidly in the opposite direction. Combined in a single sentence they can be upsetting enough to cause permanent emotional trauma. So if I say to you that *Battle Isle 2* is a hex-grid based strategic wargame you may feel the urge to rip the next few pages from your issue and incinerate them before any real psychological damage is done. But then again, you might not, and the reason for that will be either (a) you are the sort of sad individual who can quote the vital statistics of just about any piece of war merchandise in existence, or (b) that a few years ago you somehow found yourself playing the original *Battle Isle*, and, even more surprisingly, found that you enjoyed it.

It's not that a few years ago a number of apparently normal games players suddenly discovered that they had closet tendencies to play strat... er, sorry... you know what, it's simply that Blue Byte had managed to do something that no sane and normal person thought possible: to make a... thingy... that was accessible, absorbing, and, yes, dammit, fun!

(Right) Revenge of the Sinclair C5s! Who would have thought that the laughing stock of the '80s would actually become the fighting force of the 21st Century?

(Below) Mission briefings, essential communications and even messages of congratulations are all delivered through the communications satellite downlink. It's worth noting that even your enemy can contact you through this channel.



Future wars

Battle Isle and its sequel are both set in an alternate future universe in which rival factions slug it out across land, air and sea. The weapons and units used in these battles are all logical extensions of current military technology; so foot soldiers are replaced by robots, and tanks and gunboats have become faster and more sophisticated.

The game can be played either against the computer or another human opponent. The former takes the form of a campaign in which the player must win a set of increasingly difficult and more complex scenarios. To begin with, only a few units are available but, in time, more powerful units come into play.

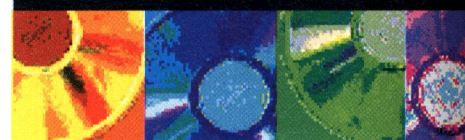
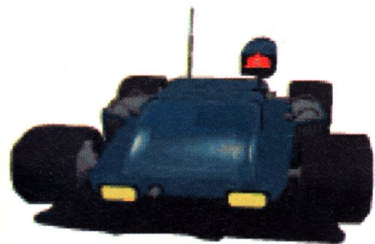
Like any other wargame, each unit has different strengths and weaknesses, and spheres of operations. The players take turns to move whichever units he wishes to, attacks where desirable and performs administrative and support functions like repairing and transporting other units.

While the objective in the first game was to capture the enemy HQ, each scenario in the sequel has a different objective. It might be to destroy all units of a certain type, or to capture and hold a strategic town. The radical change in strategy required from one scenario to another makes the play more interesting and varied. For instance, establishing a stronghold by setting up defensive rings around a strategically important area may be a good way of handling one scenario, but the next might require a bold thrust through enemy lines with just a few choice units.

Whatever the weather

In addition to the greater strategic variety, Blue Byte has added a great many other features which add complexity and depth to the original concept. There are now 50 different units, each of which may have as many as four different weapon systems. So while the Demon 131 Light Battle Robot carries only a 9mm machine gun for offensive and defensive purposes, the Dragon H1 Battle Helicopter is equipped with air-to-air missiles, air-to-ground missiles, a 30mm



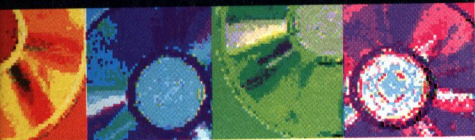


SURVEYOR'S REPORT

- 1** This is your only Rune radar emplacement on this battlefield. It is essential you protect it.
- 2** The Rune is currently guarded by ground troops in fortified positions.
- 3** The road network is essential for moving your troops and slow units quickly to the front line.
- 4** The robot unit here is slow, but once loaded into the Snake armoured-vehicle it can be quickly transported to the front.
- 5** These units have moved forward to attack the heavily defended bridgehead.

- 6** This territory has been mapped, but it is not currently being scanned by radar.
- 7** This territory is unexplored, and consequently unmapped.
- 8** This territory has been both mapped and scanned by radar.
- 9** This depot has been captured by friendly units and can now be used as a refuelling stop and repair station.
- 10** A second force crosses the bridge to secure a lightly defended island.
- 11** This unit's line of retreat has been cut off. Its demise is certain.

- 12** This bridge is heavily defended. Just out of range is a Skull gun emplacement.
- 13** The objective is a city hidden somewhere down in this corner of the battlefield. Unfortunately it is impossible to tell how heavily it is defended.
- 14** These enemy buildings close to the bridge are an annoyance since reinforcements could appear from them at any moment.
- 15** The rail network is a super-fast way of getting units beyond enemy lines, and back for repairs after a heavy attack.



cannon and a 20mm machine gun. So, not only do you have to decide which is the best unit to utilise in different circumstances, you must also decide which of its weapon systems is best suited to the role you have given it.

Some units, namely submarines and aircraft, are also capable of travelling at different vertical levels, a factor that is often ignored

in two-dimensional wargames. This allows for the possibility of flying bombers safely at high altitudes over enemy territory, or of sneaking submarines under cordons of boats to surface well inside enemy territory.

Terrain is now divided into 17 different categories, ranging from road and rail to extreme mountains and very deep seas. Each unit is only capable of movement on some of these terrains and the rate of movement is also dependent on the terrain. There is, however, an added complication, since one of the significant additions to the game is weather systems.

There are six possible weather systems: clear, light rain, storms, light snow, and blizzards. Not only does the weather have a direct effect on obvious factors such

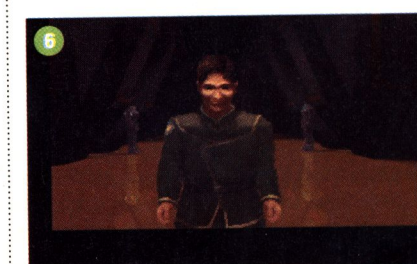
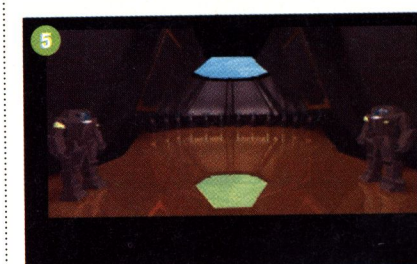
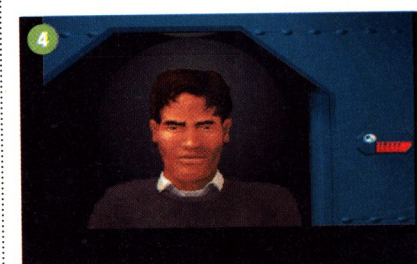
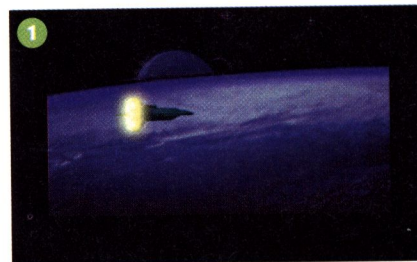
as visibility, it also indirectly affects other aspects of the gameplay. Land units, for example, may be making good progress across a dry and dusty plain when an unexpected deluge turns it into a mud bowl and brings the traffic to a halt. Or a sudden cold spell might freeze a previously uncrossable river, allowing robots to swarm across it.

The postman always dies twice

Of course, warfare is as much about keeping the support machinery going as it is about making bold and inspired moves at the front line. That is a fact well worth remembering while playing the later scenarios in *Battle Isle 2*. In fact, if you don't remember it, you won't be playing the later scenarios for very long. There are three factors to be taken into consideration: ammunition, fuel and energy. Obviously each unit has a limited amount of the first two and this must be taken into account when planning ahead. Units can be re-armed and refuelled either in the field (if you have suitable tanker and transport vehicles) or returned to friendly towns and buildings first.



(Top) At any stage during the battle you can call up information on a particular unit. As well as giving you a 3D view of the unit, this box gives you vital statistics that are essential in weighing up your situation. (Above) Although all of the vehicles are based on familiar technology they have been given futuristic designs.



Welcome to the ROOM!

1 As the ship, loaded with its mysterious cargo approaches the planet Drull, its single human inhabitant has no idea of the fate that awaits him.

2 Permission is given for the ship to land right in the heart of the city – an unprecedented privilege.

3 His reception committee waits anxiously, wondering if he really could be who they say he is...

4 ... Anorak Man! The most powerful nerd in the universe. He can talk about RS232 interfaces for days.

5 He is quickly taken to the ROOM! The location of the finest minds on the planet.

6 There he is told the awful truth ... there's a war on sonny. Somebody needs to run it. You got the job!



SCORE

Without a shadow of a doubt, the strategy game of the year.

Minimum Memory: 4Mb

Minimum Processor: 386DX 25MHz

Hard Disk Space Required: 6Mb

Graphics Modes Support: VGA, (SVGA)

Soundcards Supported: internal speaker, Tandy, Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold, Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, Pro Audio Spectrum, Pro Audio Spectrum Plus, Roland MT-32

Controls Supported: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Double speed CD drive and 486DX processor recommended.

Price: £54.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Blue Byte **Tel:** 0727 868005

IN PERSPECTIVE

Although the original *Battle Isle* looks primitive next to the sequel, it still plays extremely well.

Historyline uses a similar system, but is based firmly in reality.

Battle Isle

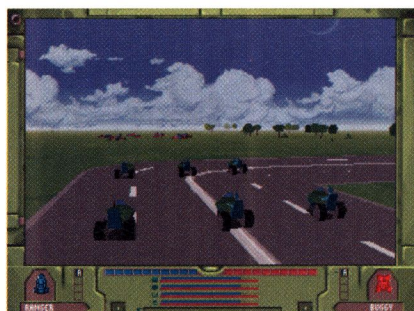
Battle Isle 2

History Line

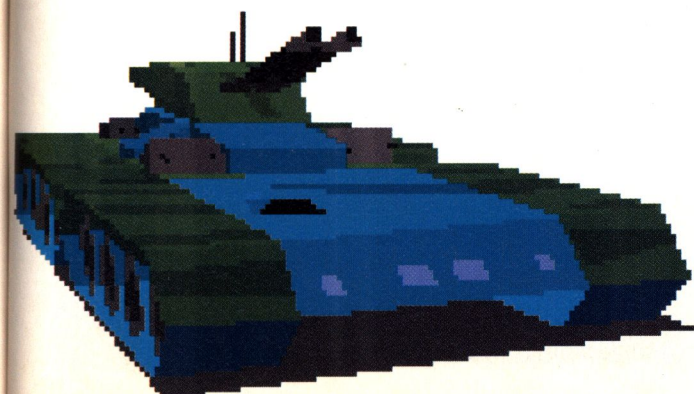
Battle Evolution

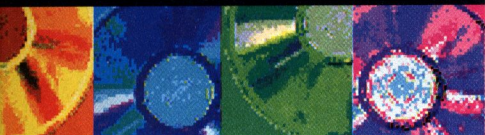


THE STRATEGIC BATTLEFIELD Although both *Historyline* and *Battle Isle 2* use essentially the same format for the tactical screen, the interface is improved and the new display is clearer and more animated.



THE BATTLE DISPLAY One of the aspects of the game that has really changed for the better is the battle display. Gone is the top-down view, which has been replaced by a dramatic 3D representation of the exchange of fire.





Microcosm

Microcosms – they're quite tiny aren't they? Chris Anderson – he's quite tiny too isn't he? Who better to review this game then? (The Crankies? Ed.)

T

HIS HAS got to be the best looking arcade shoot 'em-up game I have ever seen, ever!

Forget about 7th Guest and co. as the perfect games to show off your sexy PC and brand spanking new double speed CD-ROM drive. *Microcosm* wipes the floor with the lot of them, at least as far as graphics are concerned. It even has a decent plot and storyline, albeit one directly lifted from somewhere else!

Fantastic Voyage Part 2

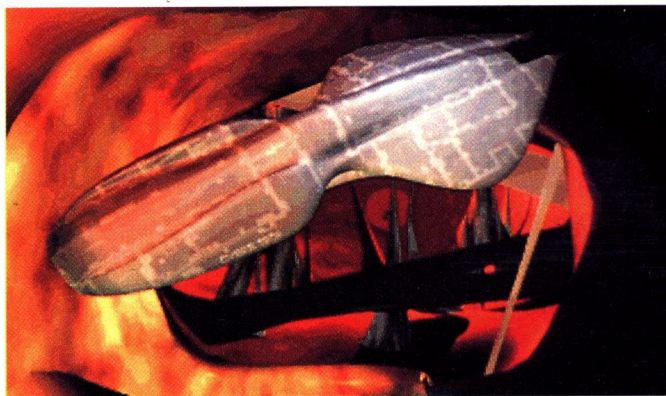
If you've ever seen the cult sci-fi movie *Fantastic Voyage* you'll know what *Microcosm* is all about. In the distant future two rival corporations, Axiom and Cybertech, are battling with each other

for premier status in the business world:

Corporation 1. – Axiom – has discovered a clever and brilliant way to enter the body of Corporation 2 – Cybertech's – president

and control him. For Axiom's doctors have been working on MICRO – Military Internal Cruise and Recon Operatives – the secret of miniaturisation.

Using MICRO, Axiom discover they can insert vo capsules (a sort of miniaturised droid) into the Cybertech president's bloodstream and use one vo capsule in particular, Grey M, to target his brain. Taking advantage of the president's upcoming operation, they sneak the vo capsules into his body but, unbeknownst to them, one of Cybertech's nurses witnesses the dirty deed. Off the nurse scarpers to the Cybertech bigwigs to inform them of the scandalous goings-on. Bloody right, they say, we've got a little bit of MICRO know-how ourselves. Jump into the president's bod immediately and sort out whatever's in there. And now it's all up to you to get in there and shoot lots of capsules and things and save the president and Cybertech



and probably the whole world into the bargain, and all this in an absolutely amazing graphic environment. Exciting stuff, eh? Well, not quite.

What's it all about?

Microcosm is all about shooting things. You shoot things, you stop and walk about, and then you shoot some more. This in itself is no reason to write the game off. *Xenon 2*, for instance, is still one of the best arcade games around on the PC and

what's that all about? Shooting things, that's what. The difference between *Xenon 2* and *Microcosm* is that *Xenon 2* is tense, challenging and extremely exciting, despite having no soundcard support and no slick and groovy CD platform to use for stacks of amazing graphic files and animations; whilst *Microcosm*, on the other hand, is a game produced using the leading edge of CD technology and still can't produce the goods.

Times they aren't a changin'

There are several problems with *Microcosm*. For a start, all the levels look the same. As you fly through the president's bloodstream, blasting away at everything in sight, you begin to wonder if the gameplay is ever going to change. Nasties come at you from the side, nasties come at you from the top, and you shoot them. You start to ask yourself serious questions like: 'Is this all there is to it?' and: 'Why have I been playing this game for an hour?'

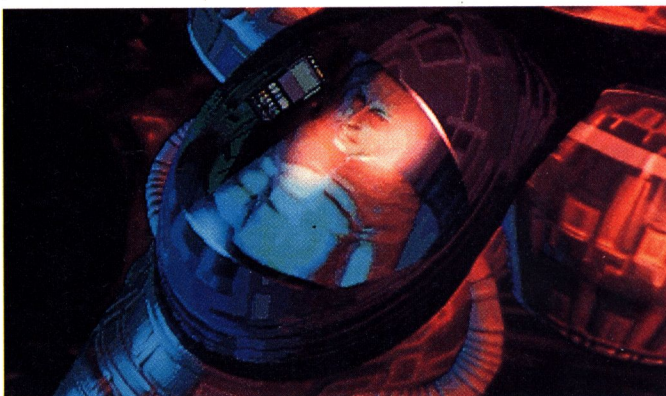
Stand and be blasted

Another problem is the nasties themselves. I don't expect them to just stand there and get bopped, but they come at you from all directions, flying about in a completely illogical fashion, so most of the time it's more a matter of luck than judgement as to whether you hit any of the sodding things. The final nigglesome prob is rather more simple. It's boring! Okay, so you come up against the odd strange looking ship and things that look like tennis balls rolling up and down metal bars – but basically the gameplay's the same. You shoot them all the same way and they all blow up the same way, you continue to get bored the same way. The whole thing is a bit of an absolute shame,



(Above) Now that's what I call a serious transport.

'Positively encourages you to split the carotid artery.'





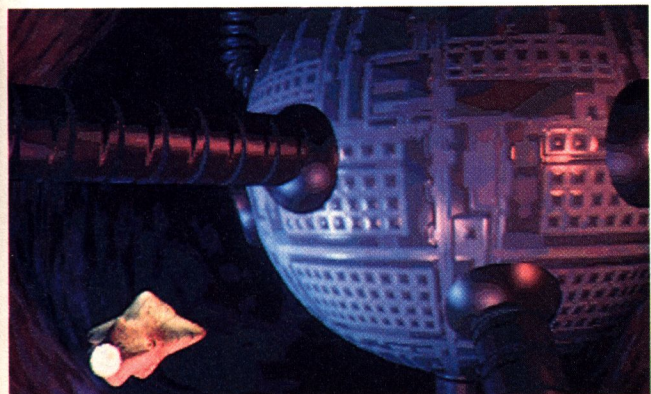
really. The graphics and sound are stunning. *Microcosm* is made of the sort of stuff that has lots of people crowding around your PC going 'Coo, what's that?' But what else exactly has the game got going for it, apart from being an excellent showpiece for your PC hardware? Well, it's weird!

Your kneebone's connected to your...

If you're looking for a shoot 'em-up with a difference, you've come to the right place. There's no blasting away at a seemingly endless



stream of aliens in *Microcosm*. There's no trying to put an end to a screen full of cutesy little loveable wotsits. Your journey takes you into the very heart of the human body, right through all the squidgy bits and out the other side again. How many games do you know with levels called the Cephalic Vein? How many games take you right to the femur bone, let you play about in the superior vena cava, positively encourage you to split the carotid artery, and dare you to venture into the human brain and chuck lots of things at it? None. Bit of a shame, then, that this one's so basic. **Z**



(Left) Battle to the death with the killer marshmallows. (Above) They're blue, they're bouncy, and they whiz about all over the place so you can never hit the damn things.

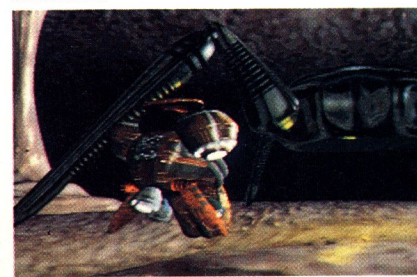


(Above) Fly around the squidgy bits and blow up all the mines.



(Above) Mean looking dude or what? And what a suit. Fab!

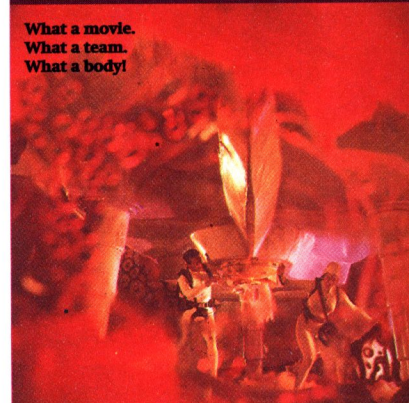
(Below) This virtual reality lark is getting out of hand.



Where it all began

The entire concept of *Microcosm* has been pinched hook, line and sinker from a rather cracking science fiction movie called *Fantastic Voyage*, whose creators nicked the idea from a book. It's all about a medical team who jump into a miniature submarine and are injected into a top scientist's bloodstream to deal with a clot on his brain. As far as sci-fi movies go, it was one of the biggest hits of the '60s, sporting special effects way ahead of its time and everyone generally agreed it was fab and groovy. It even had Racquel Welch in it. So how does the computer game of the movie of the book compare with its predecessors? Let's just say I'd rather spend five minutes in the company of Racquel Welch than two horrendously infuriating hours farting around with *Microcosm*.

What a movie.
What a team.
What a body!



SCORE

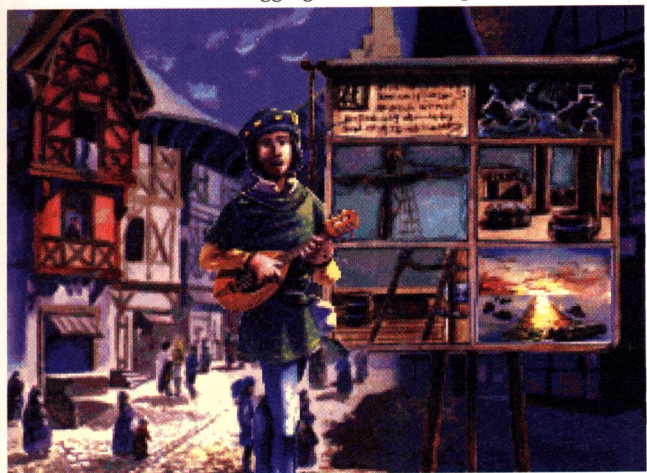
Brilliant graphics and excellent sound. Let down by limited gameplay.

Minimum Memory: 4Mb RAM
Minimum Processor: 386/16MHz
Hard Disk Space Required: 12Mb
Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Gravis Ultrasound, PC Speaker
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick
Price: £49.99 **Release Date:** Out now
Publisher: Psygnosis **Tel:** 051 709 5755

The Patrician

(Right) The townsfolk dance merrily, blissfully unaware their tax is going up 50 per cent.

(Below Right) Pop down the pub, hire a few bods, and send them off to sea completely pissed.



(Above) Hello mate. Do you know Molly Malone?

(Below) Sit in your office and cry over how much money you owe.



EVERYBODY'S DOING IT. They're all at it. Every software house in the country is rushing to join in and grab a piece of the action. 'What on earth is he talking about?' I hear you saying. I am talking, chaps and chapeses, about how everyone who has ever released a game that has been even mildly successful on other platforms over the last few years, seems to be dragging it out of the cupboard, blowing the dust off it and

whacking it onto a shiny new CD and then proudly announcing that it has been 'enhanced'. My idea of an enhancement, and I expect yours also, is totally at odds with that of the aforementioned enhancement announcers. Who cares if the music has been slightly improved? Sod the extra occasional animations. All we

want to know is, is the gameplay any better? Invariably, the answer is no. All you get from your average CD conversion is a few extra tunes and sound effects. So what has *The Patrician* got to offer to justify the transition to CD other than saving you a bit of space on your hard drive?

The song remains the same (almost)

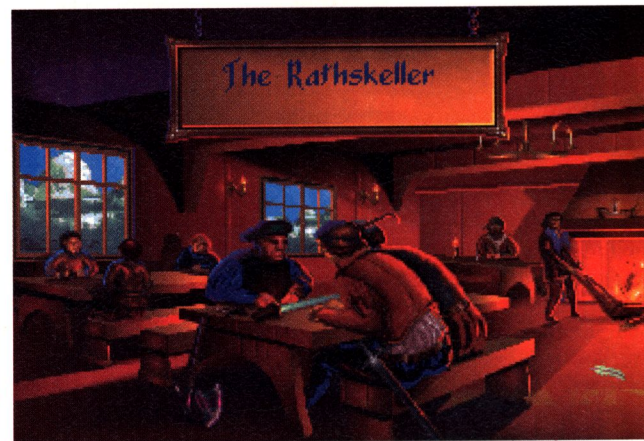
The music's better, there's more sound effects, extra animations (there's lots of extra seagulls flying about and stuff), and a new animated intro with a strange looking dude singing a very short ship-type song. Big deal, you might think. Well, it's not exactly a big deal but, funnily enough, in *The Patrician's* case, the stereo music soundtrack and extra animations do enhance the gameplay

to some degree. It just feels better. Okay, the gameplay's basically the same. It's still all about buying ships, sailing all over the place buying and selling commodities for a profit and generally striving to become the wealthiest and most powerful dude around - with more atmosphere.



To buy or not to buy

So, we're back to where we started. Has it been significantly enhanced, or has it not? Should you rush out and get it or are the enhancement announcers trying to pull the wool over your eyes and having a right laugh again? The answer to these questions depends on whether you have the original game or not. If you have, the answer is no - the CD version is better, but not that much better. If you haven't the answer is yes. As strategy/trading games go, *The Patrician* is one of the better ones. The graphics are well above average, the interface is simple and easy to use, there's always lots of things to do at any one time to keep you busy and, most importantly, the gameplay is addictive. It's not the game to go for if you like a little bit of action to liven up your buying and selling activities, but if strategy is more your thing, you won't be disappointed. I liked *The Patrician* in its original form and played it for ages. The CD version has rekindled my interest and I will probably end up playing it for ages - again. Chris Anderson



A good game on disk, slightly better on CD

SCORE
70

specs Minimum Memory 4Mb
Minimum Processor 386/25 MHz
Hard Disk Space Required 6Mb Graphics Modes
Supported FX Soundcards Supported Sound Blaster,
Ad-Lib

Price: £39.99 Out: Now Publisher: Daze Marketing Tel: 071 328 2762

USA With Flight Assignment ATP CD-ROM



HERE'S YET ANOTHER CD-ROM BARGAIN BUNDLE. This time round it's ATP fanatics who will reap the benefits of the hit-and-miss shovelware approach, as this package contains not only the original ATP game, but also the scenery disks for USA East and USA West as well.

ATP, for the uninitiated, is Sublogic's commercial airline simulation, *Air Transport Pilot*. The original ATP game gives you the opportunity to fly a Boeing 737, 747, 767, Airbus A-320 jet airliner or Shorts 360 twin-engine turboprop around the USA. The extra scenery disks use the same planes, but let you fly them around different places. The package includes loads of maps, the obligatory million page manual and lots of blab about how amazing commercial aircraft are and what fun it is to be a pilot.

Look mum, I'm a pilot

ATP is similar in look and feel to *Microsoft Flight Simulator*, so much so in fact that the scenery disks supplied with the ATP USA pack can



be used with the original *Microsoft* game. Also, like *MFS*, ATP has no end of external views and an incredible amount of features and options. Budding commercial pilots can fly single flight assignments to and from wherever they like and if you're really into becoming a 'proper' pilot you can take the career assignment and fly around the USA forever and ever, pretending you're the 'real thing'.

Mind you, there's no way you'll really get to grips with this game without studying the massive manual to death first.

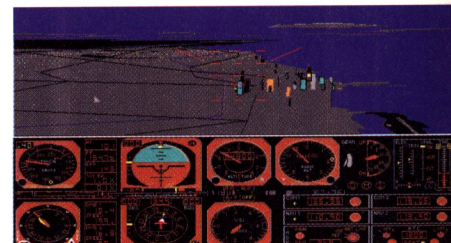
Simple scenery

Despite the impressive amount of external views, the in-flight graphics are, to say the least, simplistic. Anyone who has played any of the recently released combat flight sims, perhaps most notably *TFX*, will look at ATP and laugh aloud. Visually impressive, it most definitely is not, but then anyone who wants to play this type of flight simulator will not find this a particular problem. *Microsoft Flight Simulator* looked absolutely awful for the first few releases and still sold like hot cakes. It gets back to the old argument of realism against entertainment. That would almost certainly be Sublogic's argument if asked to explain why ATP's graphics are so crap. Personally, I don't see why you can't have an ultra realistic

flight simulator and appealing graphics.

Creators of some commercial flight sims seem to think they have every right to release a game with awful graphics, just because the flight engine is so realistic. However, they might do well to have a look at *Tornado*, which has an extremely realistic flight engine. And while the graphics aren't exactly the best I've seen in a combat sim, they certainly still knock spots off this.

Visual gripes aside, if you're looking for a commercial flight simulator, this one has all the features you would expect including digital speech from Air Traffic Control. ATP also offers reasonable value for money with the inclusion of the extra mission disks. On the other hand, if you're looking at the screen shots and thinking 'Ugh,' then you'll probably find that *Microsoft Flight Simulator 5* is light years ahead in terms of graphics and presentation, so go off and buy that instead. Chris Anderson



(Above) Chicago at night.
(Left) You're having me on. They're not buildings, are they?



(Above) One of the less than impressive external views.

Not my idea of fun but a reasonable effort for a simulation of this type



specs Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 8086/12
MHz Hard Disk Space Required: 1.5 Mb Graphics
Modes Supported: CGA Soundcards Supported: Sound
Blaster, Ad-Lib, Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick
Comments: Sound Blaster and EMS required for digital
speech.

Price: £79.95 Out: Now Publisher: RC Simulations Tel: 0272 550900

Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space

Space - the final frontier. The place where no man had ever gone before - etc, etc, etc..

BUZZ ALDRIN'S RACE INTO SPACE is a strategy game that enables you to play the part of either the US or the USSR in the great space race. It starts in Spring 1957 and you have 20 years in which to land astronauts on the moon and get them back in one piece.

You can play against the computer or another person and even by modem. At the beginning of the game and of every subsequent turn a newsreader tells you what's going on. The Americans have Carter Walcrite and the Russians have the glamorous Svetlana Izvestia.

Once you've digested the news you can get on with playing the game. You do most things from the administration building. Buy the various bits of hardware, recruit astronauts and schedule missions; then go to research and development to improve the safety and

efficiency of your equipment.

There is an important strategy element here: what you buy should be influenced by your own long term aims and what your opponent is doing. You'll find out about him from intelligence - you'll remember how successfully they predicted the downfall of the Shah and the invasion of Kuwait. Often the first time you hear of anything is when the other side beats you to a

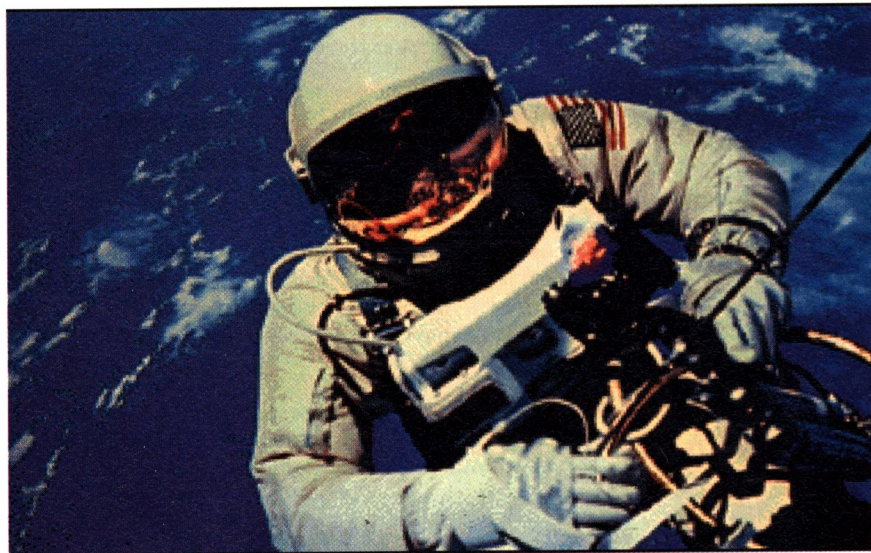
'milestone' mission such as the first man in space.

This makes for a fair amount of tension in the game but the real nail-biting stuff is launching the rockets. Digitised speech - sampled from the real people - and film makes this the best bit of the game. If you're playing the USSR you get a countdown in

Russian and people saying 'Da' a lot. Play for the home team and you get much more: 'Trajectory is good, thrust is good', the laconic 'That's a lovely lift-off, that's not bad at all' and the favourite 'We have lift-off!'

Fly me to the moon

A huge amount of work has gone into getting everything right for this game. As time progresses, Ike is replaced



with LBJ, Cape Canaveral renames itself Cape Kennedy and even social attitudes change. You can recruit all male astronauts in the '50s but not in the enlightened '60s. The program will not let you schedule planetary missions if, by the following season, those planets would be in the wrong position.

The main aim is to get to the moon but to win you need money to develop your projects. The money you get from the government depends on your prestige, which depends on the number of 'firsts'. You get 12 points for being the first to get an orbital satellite up, five for being second and three, if it blows up on the launch pad.

Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space is a user-friendly strategy game that really captures the excitement of the race to the moon. The original was strong on atmosphere but the CD version is even better. There is more film and sampled speech. The words of the CapCom during the lunar missions are completely authentic. First time buyers of Buzz should go straight to the CD version. Even if you've already got a copy of the original, the extra features and the increase in speed make this a worthwhile upgrade. *Mark Burgess*

A stunning improvement of an already classic game.



specs Minimum Memory TBC
Minimum Processor TBC
Hard Disk Space Required: TBC Graphics Modes Supported: All major cards accepted: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland, Audio Spectrum, Gravis Ultrasound etc. Controls Keyboard, Mouse (Mouse recommended)

Price: £TBA Out: TBA Publisher: Interplay Telephone: 0865 390029

Megarace



Why anyone would want to relive the experience of driving out of London at 5pm on a Friday afternoon is beyond me, but that is more or less what *Megarace* is a simulation of. Your sole aim in life is to pass as many other cars as possible in as short a time as possible, preferably trashing the majority of the traffic you pass.

To be fair though, *Megarace* is made a bit more exotic by being set in the far future as a game show.

The show is hosted by the most odious, smarmy git of a TV presenter you've ever come across. He treats you to what is probably the best bit of acting on CD-ROM to date, in as much as everybody who watched it in the office was soon cringing with disgust and great loathing.

Megarace it seems, has become the most popular game show of the 21st Century. At great expense, a series of tracks has been



constructed in various exotic settings, from an open track in space with artificial gravity to one built in a transparent tunnel at the bottom of a lagoon. The contestant is given a limited number of laps to pass or destroy a set number of enemy cars. If he does it, he can go on to the next, more demanding track, otherwise he must make room for the next contestant.

Slow, slow, quick quick, slow

The key to winning, and indeed losing, a race are the symbols on the surface of each track. Passing over these can have either beneficial or detrimental effects on your car. Some, for example, will give you extra energy to power up your weapons, while others will drain energy from you. Some may speed you up and some may send you into a skid. To complete a race you must spend the first lap racing cautiously and learning the location of the symbols before going hell for leather in an attempt to take out your opponents.

There are several cars to choose from, and each of them has different characteristics. Choosing the right car for each track is important because there's no point in having a well-armed, but slow car on a fast track where your lighter opponents will escape simply by accelerating away from you.



Rotten at the core

Megarace has the same kind of effect as biting into a shiny, red apple to find it is rotten at the core. Viewing the tremendous introductory sequence and the cut scenes in the television studio will cause any self-respecting games player to begin salivating. Then, upon starting the game proper, the amazing digitised backgrounds will certainly impress you. The trouble is, that within five minutes of beginning to play, you will have the distinct impression that you've seen it all before. The action gives no great impression of speed and, while it's fun in a simple kind of way, *Megarace* doesn't really have much to recommend it beyond some great presentational sequences. *Laurence Scotford*

'One nice, shiny motor for sale. Just one owner. A mere 55,000 miles on the clock. A bargain and no mistake.'



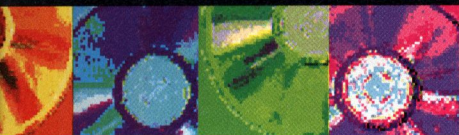
A superb demonstration of what can be done graphically with CD-ROM... and how easy it is for gameplay to suffer as a result.

Mirror, signal, manoeuvre... then head straight for the car in front.



specs Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Min Processor: 386 33 Hard
Disk Space Required: 0.5Mb Graphic Modes
Supported: VGA only Soundcards Supported: Sound
Blaster compatibles Controls Supported: Joystick,
Keyboard

Price: £39.99 Out: Now Pub: Software Toolworks Tel: 0444 246333



CD-ROM Challenge Pack



SOFTWARE TOOLWORK'S LATEST CONTRIBUTION to the compilation war comes in the form of a nine game CD. Rather than hunting down three or four top quality titles, they've gone for the safety in numbers approach and come up with a very mixed bag indeed. For the *Challenge Pack* to offer better value for money than the other compilations reviewed this month, it would only have to contain four quality titles out of the nine games and you could look on the other five as being a bonus if they were reasonably playable. Sadly, this is not the case. What you

Simply the best

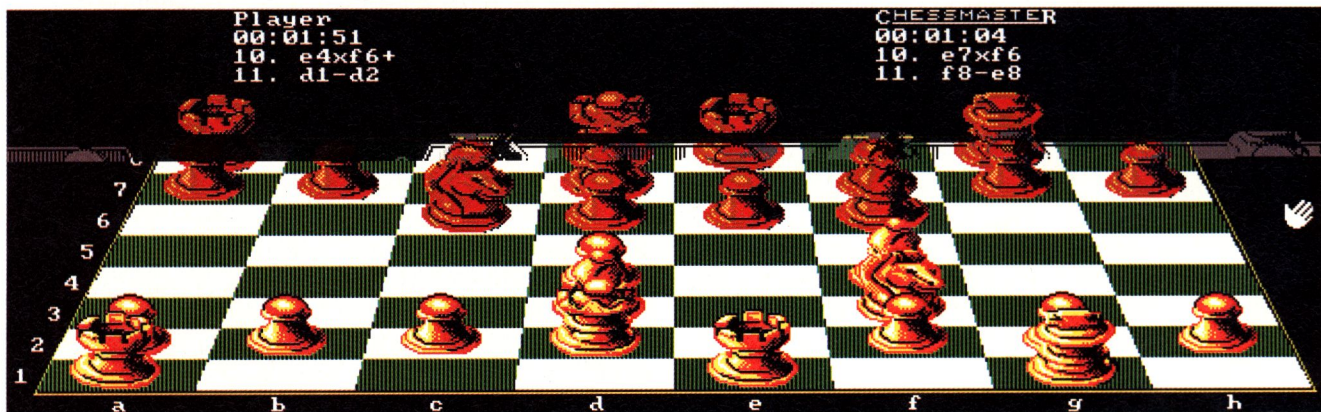
D/Generation is an excellent arcade/puzzle game and is easily the best title on this compilation. The graphics aren't particularly impressive at first but the sprite animation has a rather endearing quality and grows on

you the longer you play. The puzzles are clever and get progressively harder with each level. There are hostages who give you info when you rescue them, lots of keys to find and no end of brain teasers to contend with and the gameplay is beautifully

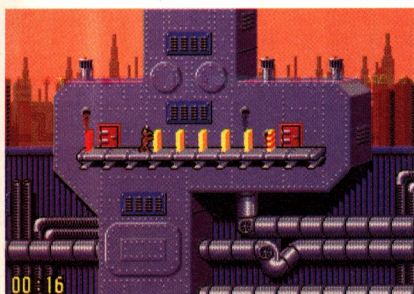


(Above) Epic: Wing Commander it's not. Dull and over in a flash, it is.

(Right) Chessmaster 2100 still plays a mean game of chess.



(Below) Move blocks about and fall asleep in Pushover.



chess game and has oodles of neat features, about a trillion game options and plays a good enough game to challenge most computer chess fanatics.

Three minute wonders

F-29 Retaliator was okay in its time but looks a bit crap now and will disappoint anyone who has played any of the more recently released flight sims. *Epic* is a spacey shoot 'em-up which is fun for an hour but that's about it. The same could be said of *Robocop 3D*. It has its moments: the gyro pack is a bit of a hoot to fly about with for a while but after that you'll have had enough and won't want to play it again.

Who put these on my hard disk?

Pushover is a completely daft puzzle game in which you move lots of blocks about and push them all over. *Might And Magic 2* is a prime example of how bad RPG games used to be before *Ultima* and co. came along. As for *Paperboy 2*, it's one of the most crap and boring arcade games you are ever likely to come across. So what have we got? Three decent games, three nearly okay ones and three completely crap ones. It might sound like good value compared to an average full priced game, but compared to other compilations (check out *Award Winners* for 35 quid), it doesn't quite make the grade. Chris Anderson

simple and highly addictive. *Contraption Zack* is another puzzle game. Your objective is to help a technician at Gadgetco Inc. find all his tools. This involves pushing lots of buttons and flicking lots of switches in the correct order to reach the exit in each room. It doesn't have the variety of *D/Generation* but there's enough in it to keep you playing for a few hours until either you get stuck, or you get bored, whichever comes first. It's the sort of game you leave on your hard disk and come back to every now and then to see if you can get past the tricky parts. *Chessmaster 2100* might be a bit long in the tooth now, having been superseded by its own follow-ups, but it's still a well decent

Reasonably good compilation, but there are better ones around



specs Minimum Memory: 640K (585K free base memory) Minimum Processor: 386SX/16 MHz Hard Disk Space Required: 3 Mb Graphics Modes Supported: VGA Soundcards Supported: Roland, Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib Controls: Joystick, Keyboard, Mouse

Price: £39.99 Out: Now Publisher: Software Toolworks Tel: 0444 246333

Gabriel Knight

Gabriel Knight



ABRIEL KNIGHT was reviewed back in Issue 12. It's an atmospheric thriller from Jane Jensen, who wrote *King's Quest 6*. The CD version has smoother animation but its main selling point is that all the text is now spoken... and spoken by real, competent actors.

Tim Curry plays the eponymous hero in a louche, almost camp, style. Knight is a bookshop owner and failed author investigating a series of Voodoo murders in New Orleans. But the more he finds out about the present, the more he unravels of his own past.

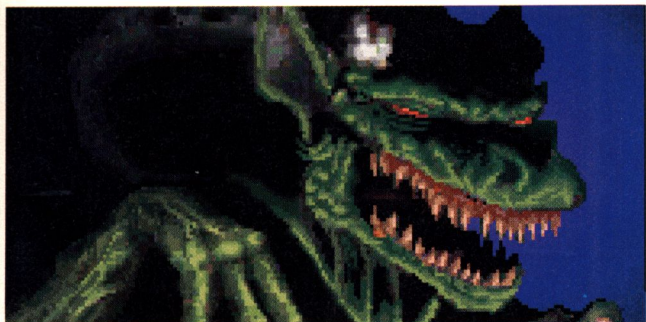


The sinister Dr John is played by Michael Dorn (the Klingon Worf in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*) and the redoubtable Efram Zimbalist Jr plays Richter. The speech slows things down a

bit (unless you are a very slow reader) but you can cut them off mid-sentence with a click of the mouse.

The graphic style of the game is a mixture of film noir and comic book cut-out panels. The music is an exceptional score by Robert Holmes which captures perfectly the feel of New Orleans.

If you haven't bought *Gabriel Knight* yet, then the CD version is the one to buy. Mark Burgess

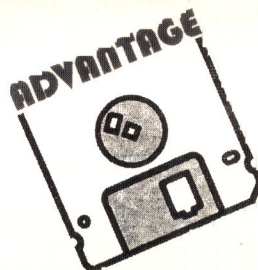


Brooding, atmospheric thriller.



specs Minimum Memory: base RAM, 4Mb ex Minimum Processor: 386SX Hard Disk Space Required: 17 MB Graphics Modes Supported: VGA with 256K video RAM Sound Cards Supported: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, general MIDI, MS sound system. Controls: Mouse Comments: Picky about memory; may need a large swap file in Windows

Price: £44.99 Out: Now Publisher: Sierra Tel: 0734 3033322



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- WORD TRANSLATOR Bi-lingual dictionary
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- MEALMASTER Recipe organiser - with recipes
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- FOOTBALL FORECAST Use to help predict draws
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- CROSSWORD CREATOR Design & print out own
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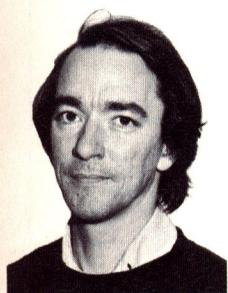
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PC from scratch**

Mark Burgess is your man. He drives a VESA, thinks entirely in binary and speaks Pascal more fluently than English.

Author! Author!

I HAVE several ambitions in life. One of the ones I am able to mention in public is the dream I have to be a 'leisure software writer' and to eventually own my own software house. However, I have a little problem.

I have been learning Pascal for about three months and I am now fairly competent. I even own my very own copy of Borland's Turbo Pascal For Windows. My problem is that I have absolutely no idea how to program graphics, let alone animate characters. My question is therefore should I stick with Pascal or move on to C or Assembler? My Daddy owns a copy of Borland's Turbo C++ for Windows. He also has a copy of Microsoft's Assembler compiler - so I'm not short of software - but I prefer writing for DOS.

Regardless of which language you suggest I delve into, I need some books to learn from, so what books do you recommend for programming in this language? Oh, and is Microsoft's Assembler whatnot as good as Borland's? Once I have written myself a cult game, how do I sell it and make heaps of money?

I would be most appreciative of any help you can give me, and I hope your groovy mag sticks around for when my games hit the market.

Joz, Compton, Hants

C and C++ are the languages of choice for just about any application. They are flexible, easy to compile and there are vast libraries of useful routines. C++ is the 'object oriented' dialect of C. The first place to start with C or C++ is the manuals: these will keep you out of mischief for some time; there should be at least a foot of shelf space. One release of Borland's actually needed a suitcase on the box.

Although C is the language you need, you require a grasp of Assembler, if only to know what your compiled code is supposed to be doing. You must have a good working knowledge of DOS; you should also know which calls to use and which are better replaced by your own routines. Several shareware programs come with the C

source, so look at these to see how the language works. The source for Fractint is readily available and you will learn a great deal about graphics by having a look at it.

Study the example programs; Borland's C++ comes with Owl Chess, a lovely bit of work. As I say, you must start with the manual. I know this goes against the grain with many people, but there really is no way round it. Then, if you're going for C, look at Teach Yourself C in 21 Days by Aitken and Jones (SAMS, £22.95) or Waite Group C Programming by Robert Lafore (SAMS, £27.50). For C++ there is Borland C++ Developer's Bible by Mark Peterson (Waite Group Press, £26.95) but this isn't really aimed at beginners. Try something like Tom Swan's C++ Primer (SAMS, £27.50).

Ian Sinclair's Starting MS-DOS Assembler (Sigma, £12.95) is a cheap (by computer books' standards) introduction to Assembly language. When you want to go further, check out Peter Norton's Norton Assembly Language (Brady, £22.95) or PC Assembly Language Step By Step by Hoffman (Abacus Software, £32.45).

In all cases, try to get hold of a copy of the book through the library before you part with your cash. The price of computer books is high.

I've never used the MS program, so I'd better reserve judgement. If it's the same as MS C/C++ 7, then it should be fine and you can use it for Windows and DOS. Most people I know (both of them) use Borland's C/C++ 4, but that could just be an indication of what was lying about the office. If your father has access to a range of C

packages, think about MetaWare's High C or C++ which will compile code for MS-DOS, Windows, NT, OS/2 as well as UNIX, Sun SPARC, Intel 860, AIX and so on.

As well as language-specific books, you need to learn about graphics programming in general. From Alan Watt comes Fundamental 3D Computer Graphics (Addison-Wesley, £24.99), and Steve Rimmer has written a book called Bit Mapped Graphics (Windcrest, £22.95). If flight sims are more your thing there is an excellent book by Chris Lampton entitled Flights Of Fantasy (Waite Group, £31.50).

Learning a computer language is like learning any other sort of language; it needs patience and study to become even reasonably fluent. You're a good way away from writing another Tornado. If you have written a game, or have a strong idea for one, then it is just a matter of contacting the software houses and trying to get it accepted. It's a lot like trying to get a first novel published, so I hope you don't take rejection too personally. If no-one is interested, you could release it as shareware and see if anyone likes it. Although the days are gone when shareware was home of the lost and the lame, quite a bit of it is still prentice work.

But that is all in the future: first get the language at your fingertips. **MB.**

DOS Doom

RECENTLY I got hold of two new games called IndyCar Racing and Doom. I've got a 486sx/25 with 4Mb of RAM, a VGA card and plenty of hard disk space left, and thought I'd have no problem running these two games. Well, I thought wrong!

I installed both games onto my computer and decided to play IndyCar Racing first. As you said in issue ten, the game requires 4Mb of RAM and will not work with other memory management software, so I decided to use IndyCar's start-up disk program to make a boot disk. After re-booting my computer I sat back and waited for the intro to appear, but nothing happened!

On the screen it was in dos prompt and it had this sentence:

```
DOS/4GW Professional Mode Run-Time  
Version 1.93.
```

```
C:\>
```

Initially I thought that there was not enough free memory in the boot disk, but then it should have printed: 'Not Enough Memory'. From here I discovered three surprising facts; first I tried all sorts of configurations and even a clean boot but still the game refused to work. Second, I decided to try out Doom and guess what happened? The same message printed out in dos prompt! And I tried all kinds of configurations for Doom and it still didn't work. The last surprising fact was that, for both games, every time I tried to access the program by typing DOOM.EXE or INDYCAR.EXE, it took about 28K of conventional memory away from RAM. There was no way of getting it back unless I reset my computer. At one point I found my total of

Two 286s

I have a 286 which is now two years old. All the new computer games now need 386s or 486s. I am wondering whether you can update a 286 to a 386 or a 486. If you can, what price would it be? My computer is a Goldstar.

Francis O'Hara, Belmullet, Co Mayo, Ireland

I've a good old 286 and I've heard that you can upgrade this to a 386SX by 'simply' replacing the chip! If this is correct is it just a case of taking one chip out and putting another in its place? Where could I get the chip from and approximately how much would it cost?

Simon Williams, Sychdyn, Clwyd, Wales

Kingston Technology produce a range of modules that just clip over the processor. There is a model that takes some 286s to 386SX but it is very machine-specific, and I don't think Goldstar is supported. Kingston also produced one that takes a 286 to a 486SLC, again depending on computer type. Call Powermark (081 951 3355) for details. The modules cost about £200 (286 to a 386SX) or £380 (386 to a 486SLC).

If that won't work you will have to upgrade by fitting a new motherboard. Expect to pay between £200 and £300 for a 486SX/25, and £400 or more for a 486DX. Before you buy a new motherboard make absolutely sure that it will fit your computer. **MB.**

True Patriot

I recently purchased *Patriot* and found that I needed a VESA driver. After trying the drivers included with the game, I phoned Olivetti who said that neither they nor Cirrus supply VESA drivers for my machine, and that the only way I would be able to play *Patriot* is to buy a compatible graphics card that would disable the old one.

Do you know of any way round this or do I have to buy one of these 'compatible cards'?

J C Hill, Ashford, Kent

Laurence reviewed this in issue eight and he didn't have to do anything weird with video drivers. Patriot comes with its own generic drivers and so long as you're video is a SVGA, and your card can support 256 colours at 640 x 480, there shouldn't be a problem. But there is, you cry. Yes, in a few cases Patriot can't detect the card's VESA ROM BIOS. The way round this is to load a TSR driver. I'm sending a copy of the UNIVESA driver. If you have Sim City 2000 you will find a copy in the VESA\UNIVESA directory. MB.

retail outlet. One of the reasons is that labour costs are the smallest ingredient of a PC's price - it's only poor sods in Taiwan on piece rates after all. The only motives for building your own are the satisfaction of doing it and the knowledge that you will get a system that's just what you want. The latter is not to be ignored while many PCs are still designed as primarily business machines. So you won't save money but you might have fun. PCs are easy to build and there are a number of books to help you. Try *Build Your Own 486 And Save A Bundle* by Audrey Pilgrim (Windquest £16.95) - Computer Manuals (021 706 6000) will have a copy. Or *PC - DIY* by Roy Bunce (PGP Computers, Unit 8, Luccombe Business Centre, Milton Abbas, Dorset; 0258 881 155). Scout around for cheap components (but be sure they work!).

I don't think building a 386 is a good idea: the high-end flight sims that interest you need a 486 - and we get some in that are jerky even on that processor. Besides which, the 386 has just about had it as a games machine.

Most CD games need a minimum of 150Kbps transfer rate and some games are now specifying double-speed drives (a double-speed drive is one that spins twice as fast giving sustained transfer rates of 300Kbps). *Rebel Assault* will run on a single-speed 150Kbps drive as long as you've got a good processor, like a 486. If you're going to share the drive with your friend you'll need an external drive - make sure that it doesn't require an internal card to be fitted, otherwise things are going to get a bit fiddly. Remember you can vastly increase the performance of a CD drive with a caching program like *Cacheall* (£69.00 from Fox Lane Computer Products 081 882 1874).

If a computer is to be used solely for wordprocessing, then the choice is vast and cheap. A 286 or above should be perfectly adequate. Remember the old advice and buy the computer for the software. Decide which wordprocessing package you want to run, check the machine specifications on the back of the box and that's your baseline. Hunt through the ads in *Computer Shopper* for bargains.

The Panasonic CR562B CD-ROM is a marvellous performer which uses an AT controller rather than the more flexible SCSI interface. Deputy editor Laurence 'Larry' Scotford has one, which he bought with his own money and everything. MB.

Premier Problem

I RECENTLY added a Sound Blaster v 2.0 to my PC. It has been great and has worked fine with all my games and other programs. That was until I bought

conventional memory dropped all the way below 450K just by typing these two files a couple of times. I recommend this fantastic trick to anyone out there who wishes to perform the 'Memory Disappearing Act' in less than five moves.

Anyway, my friend tried both games out on his 386DX/40 with 4Mb of RAM and they worked perfectly! Is it my RAM chips that are calling the problem, since all other big games such as *Syndicate*, *Serpent Isle*, and *Shadowcaster* work perfectly on my PC?

Please could you print this letter and solve my problem, because I suspect there are lots of PC users out there who are experiencing the Memory Disappearing Act!

Calvin Chow, Islington, London N7

After I wrote about *IndyCar* in issue 12, I got a very interesting letter from Miles Osborne. He had experienced problems with the game and found out that it was because DOS Extender 1.94 did not work on all systems. Miles found problems with *IndyCar* and a 'shareware game'. You don't say what make of computer you have, but problems have been reported with Acer and PCU. A patch is available for *IndyCar*, which updates it to v 1.02x (x=e English, x=g German, x=f French) and solves the problem.

DOS Extender is really just a form of memory manager. You have an early version and should get version 1.05 or above. Call Virgin (081 960 2255) for the *IndyCar* patch; *Doom* is at v 1.1 and v 1.2 is due soon. That should be the end of your problems. MB.

DIY PCs

I HAVE been told that it's possible to build your own PC. Just by collecting the various bits (and PCs ho, ho) you can build a fully-functioning 486 DX2-66, SVGA, 10Mb RAM, 10Gb HD for under a tenner. Well, perhaps not quite, but you can save money. Anyway, if this is the case, what bits do you need, where can you get them from and do you need a PhD in Electronic Engineering to do it? I'm stuck with a 386SX/20MHZ that my mum borrows from her office. This wouldn't be so bad if I wasn't hooked on high-end flight sims (ever completed *Strike Commander* on a 386?). I seem to be buying games that need 486 ninja-killer-hyper-mega-death-acid computers to run them at anything like their full potential. I don't get a huge wad of pocket money, so, how much, approximately, would it cost to build my own little 386?

I read your review of *Rebel Assault* and thought it would be good to get a CD-ROM drive. I was thinking of sharing one with a friend. Bearing in mind the computer set-up, what would I have to get to run *Rebel Assault* at a decent speed? Finally, what kind of set-up would you recommend for a person who runs their own business and wants to do mainly wordprocessing work?

Robert Watson, Pollokshields, Glasgow

P.S. I have seen an advert for a Panasonic CR562B CD-ROM; what would *Rebel Assault* be like on this?

I doubt very much whether you can save money by building your own PC. Unless you've got quite a few of the bits already it will cost you more than buying one form a

Premier Manager by Gremlin Graphics. When I first loaded it up I got the music from the Sound Blaster and thought this was fine. Then I read the readme file which said that if I managed to scrape together 609K conventional RAM I would get added sound effects. I managed to get the RAM together, but to my dismay I still only had my music and no effects. As the game didn't seem to like my mouse much either (which is Microsoft compatible) I returned the game. However, I still don't have special effects.

When I exit the *Premier Manager* I get the following message:

ERROR

FREE MEMORY = 15088

SOUNDSOURCE = SOUND BLASTER

FX DRIVER DMA FAILURE

Can you please tell me how to rectify this problem as I don't know much about soundcards. Can you explain what IRQ and DMA mean, as they crop up in the set-up of the Sound Blaster and aren't very clearly explained. As I said, my Sound Blaster works fine with everything else and I would have thought it was something to do with the game. However, this 'fx driver' seems to have something to do with the Sound Blaster itself.

Could you also tell me how to get your excellent *Seal Team* demo to run on a 286. Will it run on this machine and, if so, how do you allocate enough EMS. I read the solution to this if you had a 386 but how do you do it on a 286?

My machine is a 12MHZ 286 PC with 2Mb RAM.

Stuart Miller, Skeene, Aberdeenshire

Premier Manager needs the IRQ setting to be 5 or 7, so try that first. Otherwise, your version of Sound Blaster may be different from the original hardware specification. Look for a file called CPVOICE.DRV in the *Premier Manager* directory. This is the sound driver. Replace it with the file with the same name on the disks that came with your soundcard.

You will see a line in your AUTOEXEC.BAT that sets the sound card options; it starts off 'SET BLASTER'. The SET BLASTER line means the following:

A 220 (Address)

I 7 (IRQ; 2, 5 or 7)

D 1 (DMA channel; 1 or 0)

T 3 (Type; Sound Blasters are 1 (old) or 3 (new), Sound Blaster Pro is 2 (old) or 4 (new), Sound Blaster 16 is 6 and any clone is 1. MB.

Speccy Emulator

I READ your column in December's *PC Zone* (issue nine). The part I want to refer to is the letter from Jamie King 'A Speccy Writes' about emulators. I'm especially interested in Amiga emulators because I have Norman Lin's MOD-editor and I want to play some real Amiga modules. Can you tell me where I can get such an emulator, what is it called, etc?

De Prince Jeffrey, Oostende, Belgium

There is a shareware Amiga emulator called which I first came across on the CD compilation *Hot Sound And Vision* (reviewed last issue). It's limited to reading floppies. As I said in my reply to Jamie King, emulators are rare and limited in their scope because to work, they must trespass on the manufacturer's code. MB.

TROUBLESHOOT

The HackMasters™ are still on holiday due to the energy-sapping HackMasters™ Conference. To fill the void of their absence, the TruePlayers™ have taken it upon themselves to destroy a selection of current arcade adventures whose tricky arcade bits and puzzley, adventurey sections have caused frowns of consternation on the faces of TruePlayers™ the world over. Last month we had the first parts of solutions for *Sam And Max*, *Alone In The Dark II*, and *Star Trek II: Judgement Rites*. The TruePlayers™ continue this part with the second and final instalments, pausing only to take a swipe at that puzzler of puzzlers, *Hand Of Fate*.



Phone: 071 917 7689

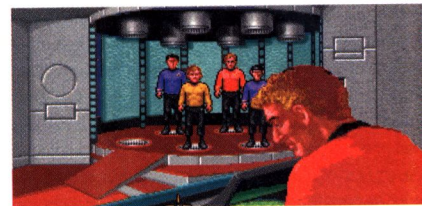
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Star Trek II:
Judgement Rites

PART TWO



(Above) Judgement Rites. Faithful to the original. Rite (ha) down to the curly-haired transporter chief. And did you know that Nurse Chapell in Star Trek was married to Gene Roddenberry, and then went on to be Luxwanna Troi and the 'computer voice' in The Next Generation?

LAST MONTH, we spoiled the first four missions of *Judgement Rites*. Allow Aidan Reeve, then, to beam up into your living rooms and dole out the complete, microscopic, absolutely one-hundred percent, stage-by-stage spoil for the remaining four.

Episode five: Voids

After the rough ride, you find yourself on the bridge of the Enterprise looking back from the view screen. Talk to all the bridge crew and then use Spock on his computer console three times, talking to him in-between. Spock then volunteers to transport first. Let him and you discover that alien life forms are involved.

Use the science station again and Sulu will open up the turbolift escape route. From the main schematic screen select Auxiliary Control and enter that area. The Vurian will bounce you out – now use your communicator and speak to everyone: Scottie to transfer power to the shields to keep hull integrity up to at least 85% and McCoy to suggest the medical scan. Use the red phaser on the door to Auxiliary Control to make an eye-hole and then use the medical tricorder on this to obtain a scan of the Vurian. Now take this to McCoy in Sick Bay and he will analyse it, producing a method of putting the Vurian to sleep. Take this to Engineering and install it in the equipment to the right of the stairs. The

Life Support control panel is off to the left. Use this to introduce the gas into Auxiliary Control. Return to Auxiliary Control and this time when the Vurian phases out the sensors record the co-ordinates he has beamed to. Go to the transporter room and the chief will send you there.

You are now in another dimension and should use the two tricorders on everything. Your aim is to rescue Spock, but first you need to speak to the Vurian. He will summon the Savant who is to be found off to the right. Pick up the bag and chat with the Savant, but do not push him too far at this stage. Walk off right to find Spock. Talk to him and break the mind meld. Return to the Vurian and, as long as you have the pouch, pick up the blue gems (having used the tricorder). Return to

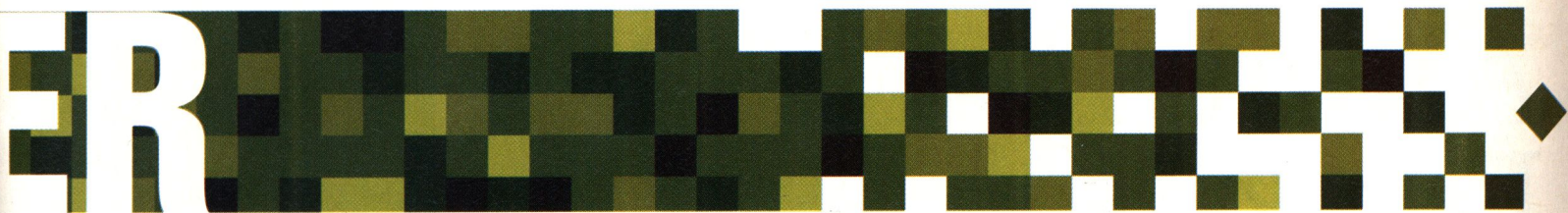
the Savant and make sure you don't abandon Spock or get the Savant to the point of destroying himself. The best way is to use the blue gems to concentrate his attention, then explain about pain and the right of choice. It may take several attempts, but eventually the Savant will see the error of his ways and return Spock.

This is an easy episode in which to score 100% and four points. Voids just needs a patient approach.

Episode six: Museum Piece

Quite an involved instalment involving the combination and use of multiple objects. First you beam down to the museum and meet the curator. You then wander around until you either try to enter Room 11 or

SPOILED!



wait for time to elapse. Back in the office you witness the terrorists, but without Bones you cannot do much for the unconscious Curator. Search the office thoroughly. You need the decanter and tray on the table, the lance from the knight, and the bottle from the alcove. This reveals a note with the main security access code. There's a button under the curator's desk which opens the door – use the knight to wedge it open and enter Room Five. You cannot enter Room Seven so the first main task is to construct a weapon that will breach this door.

Scotty is the real star of the show from here on, so take 'you' to mean 'use Scottie.' Try to use Kirk to open the door by keying in the security code (V V S O P 2 1 2 3). This will fail and Kirk should now speak to you (you will suggest a solution). Examine the phaser cannon and you'll come away with two capacitors which can be charged on the table. Now use the Niven machine to obtain the interface cable and the heat-resistant wiring. Next, examine the Klingon control system – the capacitors should be charged soon afterwards. Take one of the capacitors and head south-east to Room Six (use the access code above). In Room Six use the capacitors on the Docking Ring to get the magnets, and again on the escape pod to get the cover panel. Use the charged capacitor on the Green Mark VI robot. When it packs up get the red wiring and use Kirk to get the capacitor back. Return to Room Five. Recharge the capacitor and then make sure that you have the following items on the table: two charged capacitors, the magnetic clamps, the red wiring and the lance. Next, use the interface cable on the Klingon control-panel and then use Scotty on that machine. If you've got it all right the lance will shatter the door and you can enter Room Seven – pick up the capacitors first!

In Room Seven take the gas canister. This can be used as one way to 'solve' the episode but it will not give you full points. Enter Room Nine and take a fragment of the crystal. You need to open the panel on the large exhibit, but it's wedged shut. Use one of the capacitors on the Dunkelberger Mark XII and then use Scotty to tell it to open the hatch on the other exhibit. Once the panel is open you should examine it at regular intervals as you use the Cognac, the silver tray and finally a capacitor. This will be charged up and then removed together with the tray. Return to Room Seven and examine the transporter machine. Repair it with the heat-resistant wire. Look at the transmitter. Use the crystal and the silver tray to jury rig a radio. Now you can proceed in one of two ways: either use the

capacitor on the transporter to send in the gas or, for a higher score, use the capacitor on the radio and speak to the terrorists. The trick is to agree that they have a grievance and to offer them a guarantee. If you pick the right phrases they agree to surrender and you'll score the full 100% and four commendation points!

Episode seven:

This Be Madness

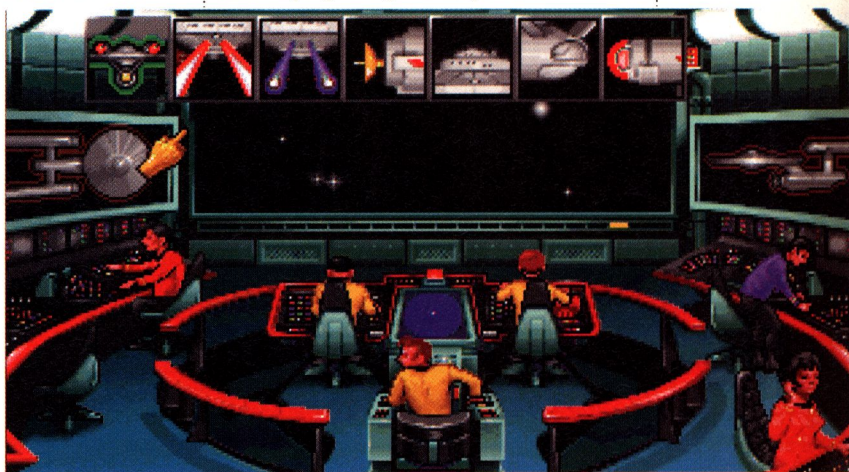
Having received your orders proceed as directed and take out the Romulan Rebel – another four Warbirds will arrive but they accept the position and should not be antagonised. The main aim is to find out who or what is controlling this huge spaceship, and to try to help everyone else along the way. The Klingons are their usual charming selves but must be tolerated at all costs to complete the mission – bite your tongue and humour the warrior race!

When you arrive at the Alien spaceship, beam over and note that the Klingons will join you shortly. Everyone on the ship is a bit touchy and should be treated with care. Use McCoy's and Spock's tricorders liberally and speak to everyone. Uhuru is the right choice to speak to the King (any self-respecting Trekkie knows her background) and he'll then vacate his throne. This allows you to use the switch behind it, which in turn gives you a strip light. Go further west into the food preparation room. Talk to the woman and console her, noting what she says about the plants. Go west into the plant room and examine the top container in the left-hand row. Take this over to the operating bench and get it analysed. Use the red phaser to sterilise it. Next, head north and talk to the spaced-out lady. Use Spock once in one of his Vulcan mind melds.

Go east four times into the playroom area. Try to talk to Tuskin and his guards. Take the teddy-bear and then use Spock to play chess and win the toy. Return west and speak to both the King and the boy. Head towards Jakesey and swap the teddy to get the blocks. Tricord these and then go back to the plant room. Fill the container with the fluids and blocks, then red-phaser them a touch to make the correct solution. Replace the container and come back a bit

later for the fruit. Show this to the sad woman and then go to her son. Tell him it's okay and he'll give you some rotten food. Give him the fruit to set a flag involving his mother. Head back to the food area and use the rotten food on the right-hand computer. Reply 'Yes' to the question and take this preparation to the analyser couch. Again reply 'Yes', and when this concoction has brewed get a 'neat' parcel of food from the food dispenser. Give the drugged food to the woman and she agrees to help you.

Go back to the playroom and offer Tuskin the other food you have. Mol will appear and give him the drugged food. Green-phaser the big guard and talk to the other one. You can now convince him to help and open up the computer area. Once at the computer, attempt to use the lightbar and wires – you must show Klarr the strip light to get what you need. The



Brassica raise their florets again. Review all the information, use the crystal item when it appears and then try to enter the portal – Spock may be needed to persuade the Klingon guard to take a nap! This completes Episode Seven and leads directly into...

Episode eight: Yet There Be Method In It

The final instalment is little more than a series of questions that have to be answered by the appropriate person. If you get this part correct, then the penultimate test from the Brassica will leave two members of your party in a dilemma. For those not wishing to spoil the conclusion do not read any further – for the remainder here is the complete list of answers:

Answer as follows: 1. Uhuru (woman) 2. McCoy (doctor) 3. Spock (illogical) For the fourth seek an alternative, i.e. do not choose one or another. When you finally meet the Brassica take the paralense and give it to the Klingon captain.

(Above) This is the, er, bridge where all the battles take place
© Unimaginative Captions plc.

Alone In The Dark II

Y

OU SWOONED at the arrival of *Alone In The Dark 2*. Gasp! At last month's teasing first instalment of the TruePlayer™ solution. Andy Clerkson doesn't

give you time to pause for breath as he utterly spoils one of the best adventure games of all time.

Ground floor

For those who have just joined us, we've negotiated the maze, found the underground passage, broken into the basement and just picked up the Santa Claus suit (last issue). Go up the stairs and take a sharp right (don't worry about the li'l chef guy) then right again. Don't cross the path of the statue, but wait, facing the open door to the kitchen. Hang around for the chef to come back. When he comes up just behind you, make a run for the open door. He follows in your footsteps and the statue throws its trident and takes him out.

In the kitchen, take the frying pan and eat the eggs and bacon. Run over to the chef and give him a good beating with the frying pan (try and trap him in a corner). Chef dead, take the wine and the poison and use the poison to make poisoned wine.

Leave by the open door and place the poisoned wine in the hatch in the double doors on your immediate left. Two zombies stagger out and die (poisoned, you see). Put the two coins in the juke-box type thing. This opens the door and a gold doubloon appears on the floor behind you. Pick it up and head into the room that has just been revealed. Pick up the tommy-gun, charger, and bullet-proof clip (don't use the charger or vest yet). Go back to the statue and take the crown from its head. Now go upstairs.

Upstairs - landing

Kill the two gun-toting zombies. Go through the door, turn right and open the first door on the left (the billiards room). Pick up the Derringer (your Thompson has jammed) and kill the zombie. Take the sword he drops, as well as the book and piece of parchment from the bookcases at the back of the room. Go out and turn left to the bedroom.

Fight the sword-wielding arms with the sword (the best method is to lunge in at them and then backtrack, lunge and backtrack, lunge and backtrack, etc.). When the arms drop off take the parchment and join the two pieces together. Place the crown on the head of the white bust and go

PART TWO



into the adjoining room. Pick up the amulet and you're off on a levitational ride to the attic.

Attic

Pick up the piece of paper and flask. Leave the room and kill the karate zombie in the sharp suit (he leaves a grenade behind), and the fat guy with the gun (he leaves a key). They're difficult but killable: try to fight with the white-suited chap between you and the big mutha and they'll accidentally hurt each other. Go to the chest and you're automatically given a tommy-gun and charger. Go into the open room. Put the doubloon in the jack-in-the-box and take the pom-pom. Open the door and throw the pom-pom into the conservatory. The spooky clown goes after the furry ball, gets all tangled up and dies. Now prepare yourself: put on your body armour, throw the grenade down the chimney (this kills a zombie down there) and jump down.

Ground floor revisited

When you land, whip the tommy-gun out and shoot 'em (run away and use the doorway tactic). Kill the three zombies and take the red ball from the Christmas tree. Go back upstairs to the billiard room.

Upstairs - billiards room

Put the red ball in the machine by the billiard table (cue nice animation and the opening of a secret door). Go to the revealed door and open it with the key from the attic. Bingo! The lights go out and you're trapped in a cell. Next you see Grace (but can't reach her) and One Eyed Jack. He gives his life-story spiel. Grace toddles off and Jack follows her.

Use the Music Man's hook to pick the lock on the green door and head back downstairs towards the kitchen. Before you get far, old hag Elizabeth gets you in the voodoo levitation grip and goes through the whole life-story bit as well.

Grace

You awake in the ship and can consider yourself captured. Carnby's shackled up and you've switched to the adorable Grace Saunders. Push the little board away to get out of the cell. Go through the hole and pick up the sandwich, the pepper and the bird seed. Give the bird seed to the parrot which will tell you that the Captain's staff is in the Captain's cabin. Smart bird.

Go out the door and turn left. Skip down the corridor and duck into the hole on the immediate right until the pirate walks past. Once he's past, quickly double back on yourself and go up the ladder at the far end of the corridor. Go up the next ladder to the deck. On deck you must be careful not to disturb the pirates. Go to the right of



the screen, around the outside of the crates, hugging the sides of the ship until you reach the second open hatch. You are safe behind the barrel by the hatch but you need the tinderbox lying next to it. This is an incredibly delicate and precise

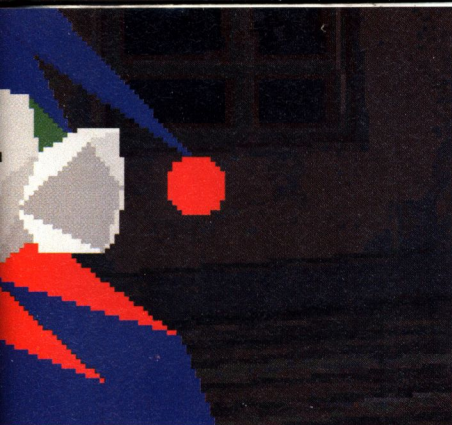


(Top left) If I had a missing eye, I'd use a velcro patch attached to my eyebrow rather than have a stringy great strap across my slap. (Middle) If I had a hairstyle, I'd make sure it didn't look like a television. (Above) And my bathroom would be clean too.

operation; move too close to the pirates and they will find you so get your angle of approach just right. Take the tinderbox and hightail it down the hatch.

Captain's cabin

Get the Captain's staff from the cupboard by the bed, pick up the crystal vase from the shelf and take the little cannon from

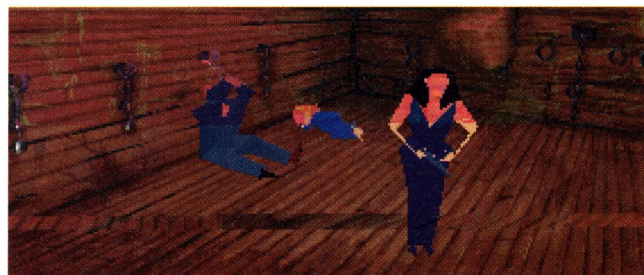


the little chest. Use the cannon (Grace automatically puts it in the right place), then use the pepper on the cannon. Throw the vase at the door to attract the pirate outside. When he comes in use the tinderbox on the cannon so the pepper explodes in his face giving him a terminal bout of the sneezes.

Go out the door and through the one opposite. Pick up the chicken's foot, ring the bell and get in the dumb waiter, picking up the key in there on the way.

House kitchen

Use the key on the sideboard on the right to open the door. Take the ice box and the molasses and head to the far door (next to the table). Go out the door until you hear the zombie coming. Go back into the kitchen and place the molasses in the doorway with you in the kitchen. The zombie gets stuck in the molasses and you can head the long way round back – through the kitchen and two rooms with Christmas trees – to get back to the hall.



Handy Hints

1. The best way to kill anything (especially if you don't have any bullets) is to run around a corner or through a doorway and hit them as they follow you out. Shooting zombies is cool, but there's no substitute for getting in amongst it with a frying pan and cutting board.

2. Read all the literature carefully as many hints and tips are contained within.

3. Drink all life-giving perfume since there are loads of tough cookies out there.

(Above left) Furthermore, if I was a clown, I wouldn't conform to a stereotypical image. (Below left) And I certainly wouldn't leave dead fat men around my house. (Bottom left) And, come to think of it, I certainly wouldn't leave specimen jars on my mantelpiece. Whatever happened to standards in this world?

upright bed (it looks like a wardrobe) on the wall of the corridor. Then come back to the music machine, put the token in and the zombie will come. Skip back round past the teddy-bear. When the zombie reaches the bear, the bed will fall and squash him (this doesn't always happen and the zombie might just get stuck by the bear – if he does just walk around him anyway). Head to the kitchen, ring the bell and go back down in the dumb waiter. Back on the ship you get caught (again).

Carnby's return

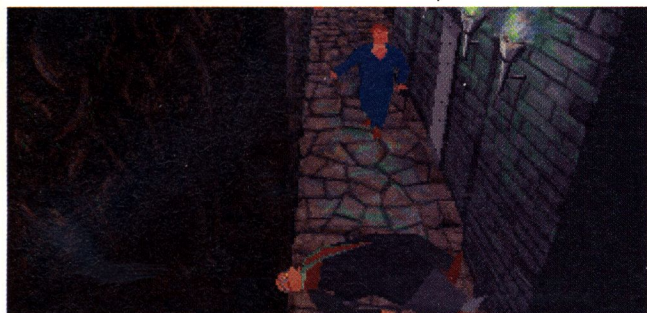
You're controlling Carnby again in the brig. Reach down with the right arrow-key and pick up the key. Use it to get out of the chains. You'll have to engage in unarmed combat with the zombie, but judicious use of the head-butt sorts him out. Take his sword. Go through the door and swashbuckle it up with the next zombie (you're probably low on life so use the doorway tactic again). Take the flask – you need it – but the tommy-gun is no use against pirates.

Head out to the passage, sword in hand, and kill another zombie. Take his pistol and fuse. Go left (as you come from the parrot's room) and into the room at the end of the corridor. Run in, turn right, trap the shooting pirate in the corner and stab him to death with the sword. Pick up the life and pistol bullets when he dies.

Go to the room next door. Kill Peg Leg, pick up the chain-mail shirt, another pistol and more ammo. Push the barrel in the far corner out of the way and pick up the bottle and second suit of chain-mail. Throw the bottle and get the parchment inside.

Go back out into the corridor and left. Kill yet another zombie and go into the room with the forge. Kill both the zombies, get the key from the corner, the pliers and the burning poker.

Use the key on the one remaining door. You might want to don a chain-mail overshirt here as the zombie coming at you is a nifty sword-smith. Kill him and take his barrel of gunpowder and book. Go up the nearest ladder.



Go back upstairs to the landing. There's a zombie here, so place the ice in the doorway – he slips and dies. Head into the billiards room and take the token from the billiard table. Go to the Captain's room and walk to the far side of the chair by the desk.



Use the Captain's staff to get a key and book. Now go to the little annex room where Carnby found the amulet. Use the Captain's staff while standing on the central square and it transforms to a Loa staff and transports you back downstairs to the hallway.

Go to the room with the music box and place your teddy-bear down near the

Next level

Enter by the door on the right (room with a cannon). Kill the sleeping zombie and take his ammunition. Use the pliers on the cannon's chain. Push the side of the cannon to move it away from the wall and put the short fuse in the cannon. Go to the bunk room directly opposite and place the barrel of gunpowder down just inside the doorway. Go back to the cannon and use the hot poker. The cannon goes off, and every single one of the snoozing zombies dies in bed. Go back in the bunk room and take the sack of gold and flask.

Go to the closed door next to the cannon room and use the gold. This attracts the two little boys. Kill them and go into the galley (from whence they came). Take the flask, go into the adjoining room and kill the head chef. Pick up the metallic Jack of Diamonds and use it to open the door to the captain's cabin (opposite galley). Cue speedy synth music and you're stuck on the ceiling again.

Grace part deux

Just in the nick of time, in wanders Grace. Use the Loa staff on the captain's statue and the door will open. Toddle bold as brass up to Elizabeth's table and use the chicken foot. Lizzy gets a taste of her own medicine, Grace ends up on the lifeboat and Carnby hits the deck.

Back to Carnby

Get the hell out via the nearest door before the funky phantom gets you (he can't be killed). Head up the far ladder to the deck. Put on your last chain-mail shirt and fight your ass off with pistols, swords, the lot. Kill the Music Man and take his hook, then do away with the two cronies. Head up the mast to slaughter the fat guy. Use the hook to slide down to the other mast and have an acrobatic duel to the death with Billy Smart's Circus zombie (the safest way to kill him is with the pistol, if you've managed to save any bullets). After this zombie has been killed and fallen off the mast, you can jump off without dying (I don't know why).

Pick up Captain Nichols' sword. Run to the main mast and use the pliers to free little Grace. Next, run over to the cannon facing the mast – you don't have to really do anything to it but this stops it firing and blowing you up before you get a chance to finish. All that's left is a pretty pedestrian sword fight with Old One Eye. Just keep hacking, he's really a crap fighter, but there is the added excitement of having to kill him twice. When he's dead, watch the credits role. You and Grace are reunited. Ahhhh! Alone no more.

Sam And Max

PART TWO



AT THE END OF LAST MONTH'S EPISODE, Sam and Max had just recovered Shuv Oohl's mood ring from the Ball of Twine. S. C. Vallender finishes off

what he came here to do. Apologies must go to all those unsung TruePlaying™ heroes who sent complete solutions to this little riddle 'em-up (all 53 of you).

Mystery vortex #2

Return the mood ring to Shuv Oohl and ask him about it. Shuv will tell you about Frog Rock and how you need three samples of hair. Part one includes details of all three (the Carnival, the Dunk Tank and the upside-down room in the Mystery Vortex). You will need these and also the mole dust that he gives you. Now head back to the Ball of Twine to work out the position of Frog Rock.

Ball of Twine #4

Go up to the top of the Ball via the tram and the elevator. At the observation platform get the loose wires and use them on the binoculars. Use the fish-eye lens (from near the Carnival Whac-a-Rat) on the binoculars and then move them around until you see Frog Rock. The mouse buttons control the binoculars. Once you find Frog Rock its position appears on the map and you can travel there by car.

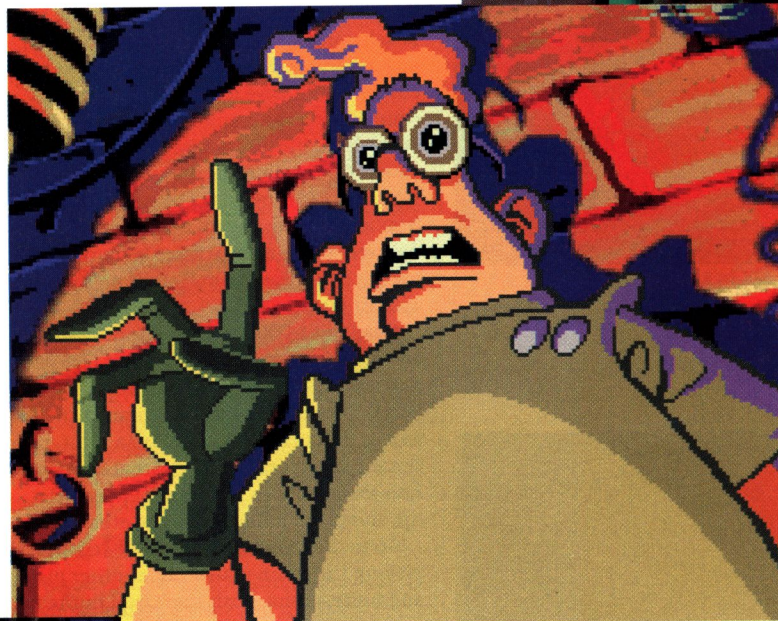
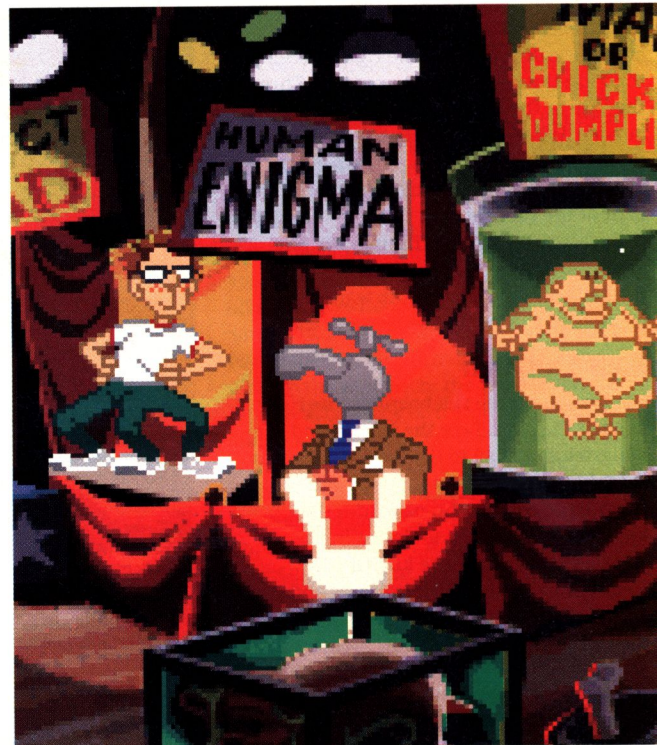
Frog rock

Go east on arrival. Use the three hair samples and the mole dust on the rock. After the show Bumpusville is revealed – go there next.

Bumpusville #1

This is a great location taking a not-so-quiet poke at Gracelands. Try the wishing well

outside and then enter the house. The mansion is alarmed, so taking the wrong objects or triggering the sensors will cause Sam and Max to be rapidly evicted. All these 'mistakes' are non-fatal so try them all out for amusement value and to make sure that you experience everything in the house. To complete the house you need to go left from the hallway and look at and then take the painting of John Muir. Now go off to the right of the hall and into the car bedroom. You do need that wig but can't get it yet. For the moment, take the pillow stained with hair tonic. You need to be able to re-program the cleaner droid so, while you're near the pillows, use the golf ball retriever on the bookshelf above the door (this is a tricky part of the game, and easily overlooked). You then read up on droids and can now search the house for the cleaner.



head east and then north into the room with the Virtual Reality helmet. In Lee's absence you can now try it out and enter a Virtual world. Save your game at this point as this section may take a couple of attempts. Grab the sword and use it on the Dragon. When you get it right a heart appears and you end up with a key. Lee returns and asks you to leave – head off to the far west and after the concert and Bumpus' exit use the key to disarm the photo-electric cells. Bruno and Trixie now come out of their trance and open up the Jungle Inn location.

Jungle Inn #1

Go into the Inn and talk to the Bigfoot guard. You won't be

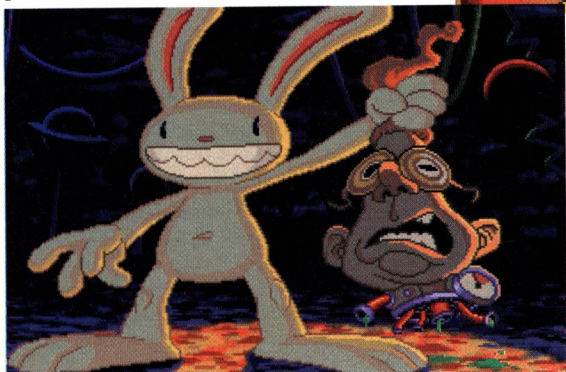
able to enter the convention room but give the bouncer your rasp file. This solves his problems, so now speak to the film-star receptionist. As you finish your conversation she gives you some brochures which open up another two locations.

Dinosaur tar pit

Go north and then right at the Tar Pit. Use the elevator and, at the top, assemble the cup (from Snuckeys) with the golf ball retriever ensemble. Use the changing screen to don the bungee gear and then use

Use the droid (love the *Star Wars* spoof) and you will then be able to program it to clean only certain parts of the house. When you get the wiring diagram, disconnect all wires except the blue wire – this forces the robot to clean the green-coloured room. The droid now triggers the photo-electric cell alarm and Lee will run in to find out what's happened. Now, from the hall,

(Left) Max the rabbit. (Above) The mad scientist. (Top left) Spot the drip. (Top right) A game played by one person and a hammer.



Hand Of Fate

PART TWO



the rope. As you bounce up and down use the golf ball retriever/cup on the pool to get a container of tar. At the top, use the screen and elevator again, and back at the pool go left to the dinosaur park. Use Max on the mammoth to get some fur and use the intercom on the T-Rex. When his mouth is open use the piece of twine, fastening it on a tooth, and then use Max on the other end of the rope. In classic Paleface style this removes a dino tooth and allows you to move on to...

The Celebrity Vegetable Museum

Move off to the right and talk to the store keeper. Give her the painting of John Muir and take one of the Bumpus vegetables. Now return to the car and, when the map comes up, return to the museum. Go back to the old lady and collect your Muir vegetable. Now return to Bumpusville.

Bumpusville #2

Return to the bedroom and use the Bumpus Eggplant on the toupee. (Seem familiar?) You get thrown out by Lee and now it's time to gatecrash the notorious Big Foot convention.

Jungle Inn #2

You need to disguise yourself as a Bigfoot, so combine the tar, mammoth hair and Bumpus's toupee with the stilt-walker costume. Use this when you're in the foyer

and pop into the cupboard to change. This allows you to enter the party. Take the bottle of wine and walk through the door to the right of the stage. Take the ice pick and try to return to the convention - Lee and Conroy will stop you leaving and try to capture you as a Big Foot. Talk to Conroy and then enter your inventory and use the costume again, but this time take it off and the villains think up another scheme. Use Max to close the freezer door and once they're banged up the Big Foot Chief appears and makes Sam and Max honorary Yeti chiefs. Listen to what he has to say: your final quest is to solve the mysteries of the Totems. Speak to Bruno (painful!) and then go north-east from the Totems to speak further with the Chief. He will give you clues to the items required, but by now you should have all four, albeit one of them which needs some further treatment. Three of the four items are the dino tooth, the John Muir Vegetable and the hair tonic soiled pillow. The fourth object is the sno-globe that needs to be repaired.

Ball of twine #5

The globe needs a stopper - the cork from the wine bottle is spot-on, but you need to open it first. Go and see the Swami in the Observation lounge and give him the ice pick. He will bend this into a corkscrew which will remove the stopper. Use this on the Globe which now needs to be filled.

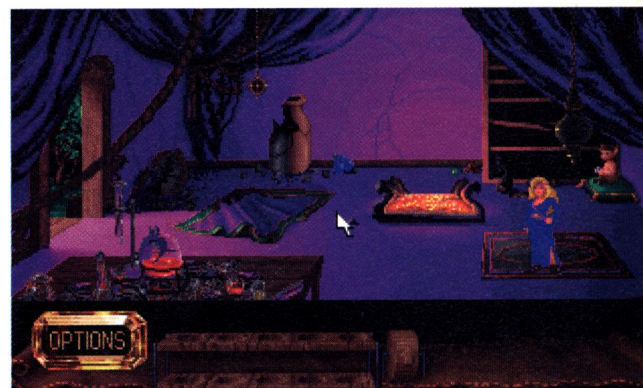
Mystery vortex #3

Go back to the upside-down room and use the mini-vortex. As it's running use the corked Globe on the vortex to fill it with Mysterious Vortex. This completes the four objects you need to solve the Poles.

Jungle Inn #3

The final sequence. Go to the Chieftain to the north of the Totem poles and give him the four objects. He takes each one and administers it to the pool and now you can sit back and watch the happy ending...

NOTE: This solution does not cover each and every object and sequence in *Sam And Max*. There are many diversions and, of course, sub-games which add a great deal to the gameplay. Try talking to and using almost everything you see to fully enjoy the *Sam And Max* experience.



(Above) Well that's the last time I invite that Dr Jekyll round for a potion tasting.

LAST MONTH we were just on the brink of zipping off to Volcania; this month we're actually in Volcania. Not a particularly tricky game this, but substantial enough to give a few good TruePlayers™ Sunday afternoon ague.

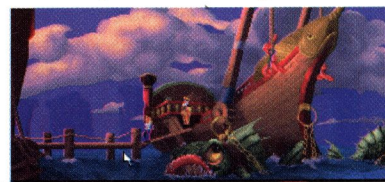
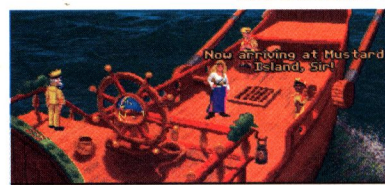
Volcania

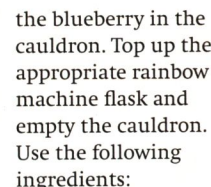
Pick up everything you see (starfish, sand dollars, rocks and seashells) and stash them in your newly eviscerated inventory. Go east and encounter an elderly couple. Chat to them and they'll offer you a map to the centre of the world (for a price). Stroll around Volcania, chat with Jessica, ignore the man at the desk and the man on the couch

and then return to the couple. Buy the map for six sand dollars, and they'll ask you to register a sand stone. Pay them six starfish and then they'll request you buy insurance forms for six seashells. Once you've forked this out, they'll tell you to jump down a vent. Jump down one of the hot-air vents

to find yourself in the lava cavern.

Pick up the two rocks and go west to find a flask. Head east until you reach the stick. Take it, go east and cross the green bridge. Climb the green steps until you reach the lead heart. Turn it into gold with the alchemist's magnet and then throw the stick twice to the baby dinosaur. Nip over the geyser and grab some black pebbles, picking up a third rock en route. Return to the T-Rex and grab some crystal fuzz from the palm





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Disk Share

NO, I AM NOT one of those people who write into a magazine to win prizes by sucking up to the journalists (though a copy of *Doom* would be nice). Neither am I some sort of disjointed person wanting to know what to do when cover disks etc. don't run. Since I started reading your magazine I have gained quite a bit of PC knowledge and have avoided becoming a Mr Cursor. However, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that you have stopped putting shareware on your disks. This is terrible. What about doing a few more cover disks like issue nine, where we got loads of shareware games, a beta version of an up-and-coming game and a four-level demo. That's what I like to see.

William Walsh, Worcester Park, Surrey

There is plenty of excellent shareware available, however our readers surveys show that people are most interested in playable demos of up-and-coming games. Therefore these get priority, and shareware is added only to fill the disks. **Ed.**

Critical Criticism

PLEASE KEEP up the level of criticism in your reviews! They are the most important aspect of the reviews, and are one of the things which sets your magazine above the others.

Why is criticism so important? We all know that most games are good, and full of innovations and ideas, but what I really want to know, as a reader of your magazine, is how bad the faults are and what form they take. This information is vital, as it enables game buyers to make informed decisions when buying a game; we know what we are letting ourselves in for, and can thus avoid the otherwise inevitable disappointment. It is actually less

important to know the good points of the game, since an unexpected bonus is a pleasant surprise and will only make us happier with our purchase, whereas an unexpected flaw...

There are further benefits to healthy criticism; it counteracts the effects of advertising hype and helps to deflate the illusions that the marketers like to build. I would like to think that it also shows the marketing people that we are not fooled. Finally, it stops the developers from getting inflated egos and thinking they have done a good job, when really they have not.

I could point out several recent reviews of games (games with which I am very familiar) where your reviewers seem to have 'slipped off the rails' a little, and have let their enthusiasm blind them to a game's flaws. Please be on your guard and keep up the standard of critical reviewing! I have admired your candid and honest evaluations since I first discovered your magazine. So please don't let me down now.

Michael Barnes, Queensland, Australia

It would be unusual for someone to agree with every review printed in *PC Zone*, since they represent personal opinion (though they should also give enough information about the game to allow you to make your own mind up) but don't worry about our levels of criticism - you can't even make a cup of coffee in this place without it being the subject of a torrent of abuse. **Ed.**

Troubleshooters

I LIVE OVER here in Canada and about three months ago I found my first copy of *PC Zone*. I am 36 years old and have been gaming for about five years, and in those five years this has got to be the best gaming mag I have ever seen. The articles are great and the artwork from the games you profile is excellent, but the first section I look for each month is the beloved cheat section. I just bought the February issue and found the cheats for *Rebel Assault* and *Privateer* to be just what I wished I had in those games. While the cheats are great, in a way I am also pissed off.

My problem here is, if you can do this for me why can't the game publishers? I found that tweaking my centurion in *Privateer* up to 3000kps gave me a dramatic speed difference. It is as dramatic as when I went from an old 386 to my 486/33. This just goes to show what I have always believed... we don't always need faster hardware, just someone who can code a game half decently. Also, when I play a game that has an Easy/Normal/Hard mode feature as in *Rebel Assault*, I expect the Easy level to be easy. I do not find it fun at all to play level one to five a hundred times just so I can move onto level six. If the hard-core gamers want to play something really challenging then the Hard level is for them. But when I buy it, I want to finish it. And if I really enjoy it I will come back to it over and over again. I have had many games that were

just too hard to beat, therefore I did not finish and am leery of buying another product from that software publisher for fear of the same crap. I keep asking myself: 'Don't they want me to play this?' It's not as though I am in an arcade somewhere plugging money into a machine every time I have to start over.

Actually, what I would really like to see is a nice cheat done for *Strike Commander*. When I bought it I played three missions and thought 'yeah right, I'll play this when I buy a 986/100 in about ten years.' But now, when I see what you did for *Privateer*, there's always hope.

I have also used your cheats for *Wing Commander Academy* and am changing all my ships for *Star Control 2*.

In closing all I can say is keep up the excellent work. You have made an old gamer very happy.

Tim Tomecko, Regina Sask, Canada

A programmers life is not an easy one. It's obviously incredibly tricky to get the difficulty level of a game right and, in response to your complaint, I imagine that they would point to the complaints they get when a game is too easy (even if it's set on easy level) since most people would not return to a product like *Rebel Assault* after having completed it. **Ed.**

The Length's The Thing

ALTHOUGH, rightly so, the subject of high-priced software always seems to be on the letters pages of every computer mag, the subject of lastability is not mentioned so much, so I thought I should be the one to raise the subject.

If a game is expensive, but you can play it and play it, you don't mind paying the right price. If, however, it's finished in a couple of days you feel pissed-off and cheated. This problem seems to be increasing with the advent of CD-ROM. Its massive capacity is not utilised to its full potential; if a game is of several hundred Megs most of this number seems to be made up of fancy graphics which give nothing to the lastability of the game, there have been two examples of this lately, namely *Rebel Assault* and *The Journeyman Project*, which I will come to later.

I myself am a very poor postgraduate student but I'm lucky enough to own a 486 33MHz with 8Mb, Gravis Ultrasound and CD-ROM which I purchased when I was a second year undergraduate. As I have so little money I can only afford to buy a game around once every three months, so obviously I have to pick my games very carefully, and always go for a game that will give me three month's worth of play, so I go for strategy or role-playing games such as *V For Victory* so I can return to these games time and time again.

Last week I went to buy my once a three month game, it was going to be *Rebel Assault* but after reading all the reviews of the game that all said the same thing, brilliant graphics and sound, but sod

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Running To
Stand Still

all gameplay, the idea went out of the window straight away. I then spotted *The Journeyman Project* on the shelf and remembered your preview of it, so I bought it. The game has stunning graphics and atmospheric sound and is over 400Mb in size, but it took me less than two days casual playing to complete it, the puzzles are so easy even a console owner wouldn't have too much trouble with them.

If anyone has any suggestions as to what I'm going to do with myself in the nights of the next 88 days until I can buy my next game, please let me know - otherwise it will be back to playing with myself.

Kerry Hoskin, Polperro, Cornwall

Perhaps you could swap games with Tim (See 'Troubleshooters' above) since you both seem to have bought the game the other would have wanted. **Ed.**

Seminality's Best Boys

I HAVE noticed in recent months, in both yours and other magazines, an increase in use of that word of words, favourite of all music journalists. The word of course being 'seminal'.

Having had it brought to my attention more and more I looked it up in the dictionary, unfortunately it didn't really make things any clearer.

The description is as follows
seminal (adj)

1. potentially capable of development
2. highly original and important
3. rudimentary or unformed
- or 4. A load of wank.

Perhaps we should be told.

Paul Geedy, Duston, Northampton

The other definition is 'word that appears in reviews written by David McCandless' which is, I think, the seminal definition. **Ed.**

Cut-Price City

THE DEBATE about games prices continues. Much is made of the argument that piracy causes the software houses to keep prices high, leading to more piracy, leading to higher prices, more piracy, ad infinitum. But one thing I observed this week has led me to draw new conclusions. I live in a city with a Virgin Megastore, a Future Zone, a Game Ltd and a small independent store all within a few hundred yards of each other. Naturally they are all in competition and do attempt to undercut each other occasionally but I could not have predicted the events that arose on the recent release of *Sim City 2000*.

Having rung up Maxis to discover the release date, I phoned a few of the shops in advance to discover what the price would be - the answer was £39.99. On the day of release, I found out that the small independent is selling at £31.99 so I make my purchase. The next day I do the rounds of the other shops to discover prices of £29.99, £27.99 and £24.99. The bargain I thought I had turned out to be rather an expensive one. This drop in price could only be caused by one thing - the shops reducing their profit margins to get more sales. As

Why do I get the impression I'm being conned? When I look at the way the industry and, in particular, the game side of it has developed, I do think they are trying to take advantage of those of us who just have to own the latest thing. Magazines like yours don't help either; you wax lyrical about the impressive graphics of games and why it is right to buy CD-ROM drives and why you need the latest processors to take full advantage of the wondrous graphics and sound on offer.

Well... okay, but shouldn't you be looking more at the games industry and asking why they need us to buy all this vastly expensive top-of-the-range stuff?

As usual I'm rambling, but really I think my complaints can be summed up as follows;

CD-ROM drives:

1. Don't appear to save much in terms of hard disk space as most require access to save games etc.
2. Are slow.
3. Are currently over-priced.
4. Have not reduced the costs of games.

Processor Power:

I am disgusted to hear that Origin are already saying their new games are going to need at least a 486DX 66 or a Pentium - why? Can't they program properly? Why does *Privateer* move like a drunken slug when really all they are being asked to do is move a few sprites around? Why don't they go back to looking at their programming techniques and attempt to keep a wide market by assisting with speed problems?

For the record, I love Origin games, but I am really getting fed up when they cost me effectively £300+ to buy as I need to upgrade my kit every time one comes out. It's not just them anyway - all companies should be looking less at the graphics side of their programs and more as to how they run - not forgetting gameplay naturally!

So I'm fed up, what am I going to do with my 386SX 25MHz? Well, probably change the motherboard for a start, and maybe even the Hard Drive and then? I'll wait - I'll wait until the price of an all-singing, all-dancing Pentium Multi-Media systems falls enough and before the next wondrous processor is more than a glint in someone's eye and I'll upgrade again. So, software houses, get yer act together, in the short-term you are losing sales and giving your industry a bad name.

Mike Hicks, (Pissed off from Essex)

P.S. I notice kids put their age on letters as they think it helps them to get printed - well I'm 35 in May! - just for the record.

After the piracy versus price debate, the row over the constantly increased technical demands is the one we receive most letters about. There is, of course, no easy solution. In the end you're a victim of your taste. Fans of software houses like Origin, who specialise in state-of-the-art sound and graphics have to be prepared to buy the state-of-the-art machinery to play it on. Only by pushing back the boundaries can Origin stay ahead of the game. However, there are still plenty of very playable 386 games, though fewer by the minute. Progress is an expensive business. **Ed.**

it happens *Sim City 2000* is an excellent game that deserves huge sales so each shop ordered in such large quantities that they received massive discounts which they were able to pass on to the customers. But I do not believe for one moment that even the largest order would qualify for a £15.00 per game discount. Don't get me wrong - I have absolutely no objection to paying £31.99 for a game such as *Sim City 2000*, and would be very keen for such price wars on all releases. But the next time you reckon it's the software houses forcing the prices up, think again - it may be your friendly neighbourhood store.

Neil C. Wilson, Horfield, Bristol

The example you choose is an exceptional one since, apparently, for a variety of weird and wonderful marketing reasons (such as getting people into their shop where they'd hopefully be persuaded into shelling out for some other, more profitable software) many retailers were selling *Sim City 2000* at a loss. However, that does not mean that retail mark-up is an insignificant factor in the ultimate price of games. **Ed.**

Hard Times

I'M DEPRESSED. Is there nothing right with this world? Old Yugoslavia is at war. The UK aren't winning any medals at the Winter Olympics. People are starving, fighting and dying. But worst of all my PC is getting left further and further behind in the history books. Literally all games and business and graphics programs made now are programs for 386s or above. Why doesn't anyone ever produce a decent game for the 286. I'm sure XT owners feel the same, maybe worse!

Furthermore, people are now making games which take up to 30Mb! (*Lilil Divil*). I hope someone hears my cry or plea for a decent, small, popular, fast game for a slow computer (12MHz). Take a normally slow game. Chess for example. *Battle Chess* has now been developed to such an extent that *Chess Maniac 5 Billion* and 1 needs 560K base RAM plus 2Mb RAM with 1Mb EMS, 386, 25MHz, 27Mb HD space and DOS 5. I am sure that with all these specs people aren't going to be encouraged to buy this. Maybe you could have a '286 Corner' where old games are reviewed again.

Jamie, Odd Down, Bath

It's always worth checking out our budget section, but apart from that I'm afraid that for the 286 owner the only rich vein of software is within the shareware market, and even this is getting more technically demanding. **Ed.**

Cursed

I'M SORRY, but I have to ask. Mr Cursor - Why?
Sean Green, Borough, London.

The answer has to be - Mr Cursor, why not? **Ed.** ☒

NB We reserve the right to edit, alter and completely mess up your letters until they bare no relation to the original. Unfortunately we are unable to enter into individual correspondence. Usual bottom-covering disclaimers apply.

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The disk includes:

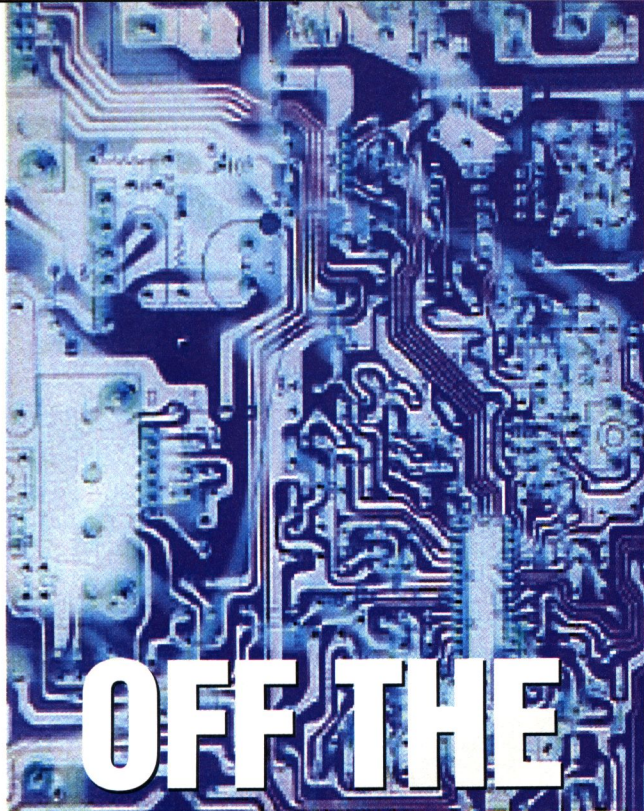
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OFF THE BOARDS

Another bumper Off The Boards; games, magazines and things that go bump in the night. **Mark Burgess** wades through the fascinating world of shareware.

Pickle Wars

A NON-VIOLENT game. This normally means that you still get to shoot things, but that they don't cry out or bleed when hit. Here you get to shoot gherkins with diced cucumber. Really. You

either play Dave, a history student, or Linda, a lifeguard. Collect carrots for health and hamburgers and cola for points. It's a platform game, and genuinely asinine as it sounds. Although the dual parallax scrolling is smooth, the animation is jerky, the collision detection iffy and the gameplay thin. Authoress Karen Crowther wrote *Maths Rescue* but this one will not go down as one of her successes.

Shareware from: MVP Software from Testware

Registration: £30.00

Needs: 286 or better and VGA in 256 colour mode

Supports: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster (problems reported with Sound Blaster 16), joystick

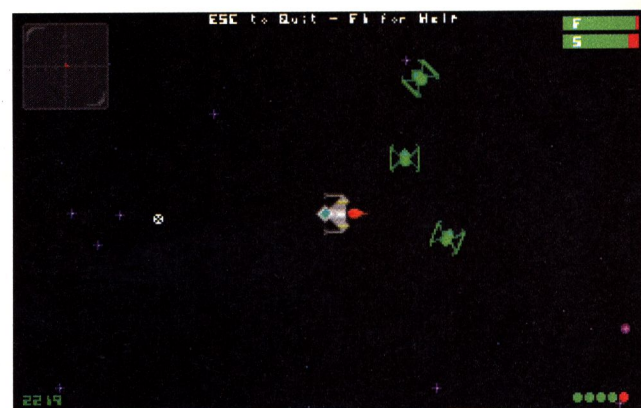


(Below) The worst thing that can happen in Pickle Wars is running out of diced cucumber.

Star Hammer

IT'S THE 23RD century and mankind is at peace. Or was. The evil Sloboids attack and try to enslave the human race. The Sloboids are defeated and their planet blown up, but a scattered remnant regroup and seeks revenge. And that's the plot before the game starts. When it does begin, you are the pilot of the starship Liberty, and must hunt down and destroy the remaining Sloboids.

The first couple of missions just involve shooting everything you come across. Then you have to start escorting transporters, so you need to use tactics and look at your map. The ship has an autopilot which gets



(Above) The evil Sloboids surround you in Star Hammer.

you from waypoint to waypoint and cuts out when you come under fire. Combat is like that in *Solar Winds*, that is, spinning round and shooting. The controls are a bit clumsy from the keyboard, so a joystick is recommended. Registration brings a manual and two more campaigns with 40 extra missions.

Shareware from: Silver Lightning Software from Testware (0423 886415)

Registration: £23.50

Needs: 286 or better, 16MHZ or faster, VGA, SVGA or MCGA

Supports: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, joystick

The Adventures Of Robo

THIS IS A PUZZLE game from Xland, the people behind *Electro Body*. Robo is a cute robot exiled to wander 15 solar systems, each with four planets. To escape, he must collect bolts, and to do this he must solve puzzles, blast walls, move

obstacles and dodge deadly objects. Enjoyable and quite hard. Well very hard actually, I'm still stuck on level two.

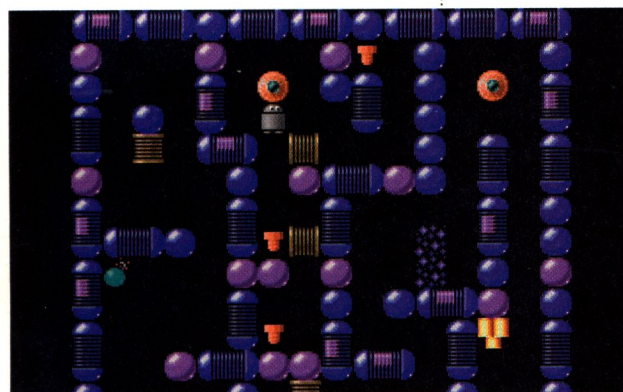
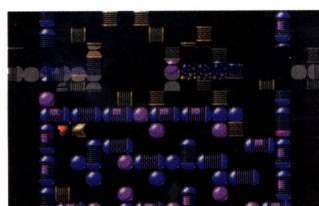
Registration is £15.99, but £26.99 gets you the full version of *The Adventures Of Robo*, *Electro Man*, the revamped version of *Electro Body* (issue five), and *Heartlight* (issue ten).

Shareware from: Epic Megagames

Registration: £15.99

Needs: 386 or better and VGA in 256 colour mode

Supports: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster



(Above) Guide cute Robo through mind-bending puzzles.

MAGAZINES ON DISKS

Do you remember *Spectrum Computing*? It came on cassette and you loaded it chunk by chunk and then peered at the Speccy's crap character set and 40 letter display. Things have moved on since then, but there were times looking at these PC magazines on disk that I got a shock of recognition.

Game Developers' Magazine

THIS AUSTRALIAN magazine is written using the shareware utility BIGTEXT, so you may have the DOS character set but at least it's in pretty colours. The first issue contains good articles on memory addressing, interrupts, registers and VGA Mode 13h. Fairly techie, in other words, but clearly written and only needs a knowledge of hex. Actual programs and graphics are promised for future issues. **Game Developers' Magazine**, 8/8 Elizabeth Place, Land Cove, New South Wales, 2066, Australia



Digital Disk PC

DIGITAL DISK comes for a variety of formats and there seems to be a bit of confusion over which bit goes where. I have the second issue of the PC

version. Under Digital Music, it reviews Master Sound for the ST. In Computer Debate, there is an argument over the merits of Amiga versus Falcon, two machines heavily covered in the news. The Technical Section is a good summary of the Assembly Language commands MOV, INC and DEC.

Digital Disk is a collection of DOS text files with the LIST utility. Subscription is £8.00 for four issues (two months) and £20.00 for 12 issues (six months). **Digital Disk PC**, Digital Disk Publishing, 70 Donald Drive, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex, RM6 5DU



Iceberg

THIS MAGAZINE is also available on old-fashioned paper for £1.00 plus p&p, but the normal version is on two HD disks (50p plus p&p if you send them disks, or £2.00 plus p&p if you don't). It's freeware and is aimed mainly at Microsoft Windows users. There are 256-shade graphics stored by page as Clipboard files. These can be viewed with the Clipboard Viewer or pasted into a Windows wordprocessor or graphics package.

Put together by Andrew Clegg and Peter Wicks. Forthcoming articles include a history of hacking, a review of Sepultura in concert, software reviews and more. **Contact** Andrew Clegg (0483 62681) or Peter Wicks (0248 604172).



Icebreaker

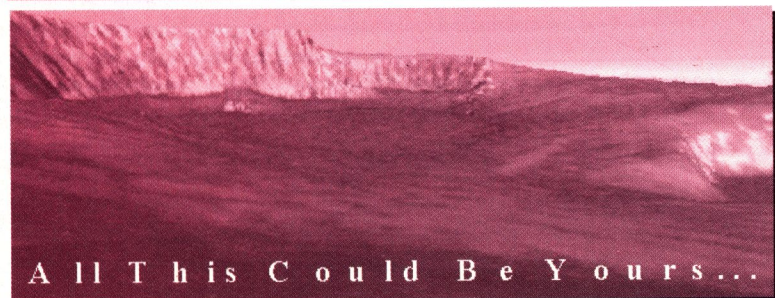
A magazine for the technophilic underground
Disk version, 50p plus a HD disk - Issue #1

Music: Anthrax in the flesh

Software: Graphics for tight-arsees

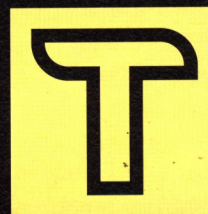
Fiction: The world is stranger than you think...

Cyberpunk: The future through chrome-tinted glasses



All This Could Be Yours...

THE FUTURE'S NOT OURS TO SEE...



his month I'm looking at some of the 'occult' programs. Those that deal with astrology, geomancy, cartomancy and numerology. I won't argue

my own bias because, as someone once said, 'those who believe without reason cannot be convinced by reason'. To help me I have two volunteers. (Well, I volunteered them actually.)

The first is Ganxhe Agnes Bojaxhiu. She was born in Skopje (Serbia) which is 42° 1' N and 21° 32' E on 27 August 1910. Ganxhe is also known as Mother Teresa. She is a nun who likes children and Jesus. She believes in contraception by mathematics but not by physics or chemistry.

Second is Adolf Schicklgruber.

He was born in Braunau am Inn, Austria, (48 15' N 13 3'E) on 20 April 1889.

Adolf is an indifferent watercolourist, a dictator, a mass murderer, a vegetarian and a politician. He prefers the name Hitler.



Astrology

ONE OF THE strangest things to happen in the twentieth century is the emergence of astrology. Just when the universe is becoming understood, large numbers of people are fleeing from reason and hiding behind a cosmology exploded in the 17th century. Why is this?

Astrology was simply the study of the sky at a time when the stars were believed to be equidistant from the earth, and set in a crystal sphere which revolved round it. The idea that the stars could affect life below gained currency during the Ptolomaic dynasty in Greece (305-30 BC). Early texts are the *Astronomica* of Manilius (c. 15-20 AD), the *Matheseos libri* of Maternus (335 AD) and the sixth century *Liber Hermetis*.

Astrology fell into disrepute, and was condemned by a Papal Bull in 1586. The fatal blow was dealt by the discovery that the stars did not revolve around the earth. The findings of Copernicus, Galileo and Kepler and the mechanistic physics of Descartes led to a rejection of astrology by most people, save the very ignorant and the superstitious. Where it belongs, of course.

PC Astral Windows

PC ASTRAL WINDOWS is a horoscope calculator and interpreter. Any chart can be calculated and the data displayed or printed in either sidereal (Hindu) or tropical (Western) mode. The program includes features to calculate sidereal solar returns, secondary directions and transits. Quick keys are provided for the rapid display of wheel charts in tropical or sidereal mode.

Navamshas and other harmonic data are displayed around the rim of the wheel, with the signs and planets being shown as glyphs. If transits or another person's data have been calculated, the planets are again shown around the rim of the wheel.

Aspects are calculated and shown in matrix form with major and minor configurations available. Aspect orbs can be altered with only a few keystrokes. *Astral Windows* has an on-line guide to daylight savings times in the UK, France, Germany, Holland and Spain and also the ability to display us zone times.

Registration brings interpretation and prediction modules, hundreds of birth dates of the famous and infamous, support for one month and full documentation.

Shareware by: M. Magee, 18 Grafton Road, Harrow HA1 4QT.

Registration: £35.00 (\$60.00)

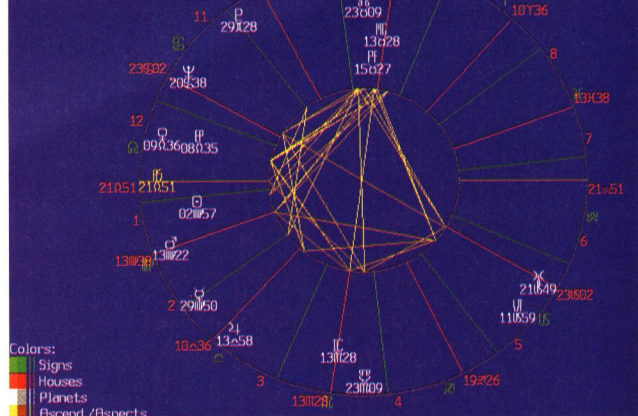
Needs: Any IBM with CGA, EGA, VGA or MCGA

Astro

THE POPE WILL no doubt be surprised to learn that Mother Teresa is 'a passionate lover... unable to project [her] emotions in a useful positive manner'. The program goes on to tell her 'vanity makes you touchy... You are fascinated by the occult mysteries'. Mother Teresa also likes 'good food, creature comforts, and security - both the financial and emotional kind'. She apparently gravitates towards jobs that can make use of her 'gift of gab and [her] clever pen. She often learns-to-earn, and then buckles down to a well-planned, practical career in the business world'. She resents people who are more successful than she is.

Because her 'Venus is Squared to Immum Coeli With an Orb of three degrees' she has 'much difficulty sustaining family ties, or maintaining a happy household' and 'tends to resent her parents and family members'. She prefers, her fellow nuns will be glad to hear, 'gentle sex' because her Mars sign is 13.22 degrees Virgo and is in Direct motion. But would she

NATAL HOROSCOPE:
ganthe agnes bojaxhiu
Birth: 08-27-1910
Time: 04:00 AM



How the stars looked down - Mother Teresa's birth chart.

subject, Hitler? He was actually a firm believer in astrology. So what do the stars say about him?

His Ascendant sign is 20.39 degrees Leo and is in Direct motion. So his 'dignified

manner does not conceal his generous good nature or his need for affection.' It tells him he has (or had) 'refined proper manners and a beautiful appearance. You are graceful and charming, and have good taste. You will attract a congenial mate, and probably will have a happy marriage.' I like the 'probably' there; Hitler blew his brains out shortly after his marriage to Eva Braun in 1945.

His 'popularity stems from your spontaneous fun-loving approach to life. You add excitement to everything.' Because Hitler's Neptune is 'in the Second House, Not on a House Cusp and Less Important' he 'wants to use his money for humanitarian causes, often spending on impulse.' However; 'Your Pluto sign is 8.42 degrees Leo and is in Direct motion. This generation focuses on the struggle for power and world leadership - especially on the complex problems caused by the boom of nuclear power. Your Pluto is Squared to Medium Coeli With an Orb of zero degrees. This gives you a total irrational lust for power, and causes career difficulties and problems. Your lust for power may lead you to infamy or disgrace.'

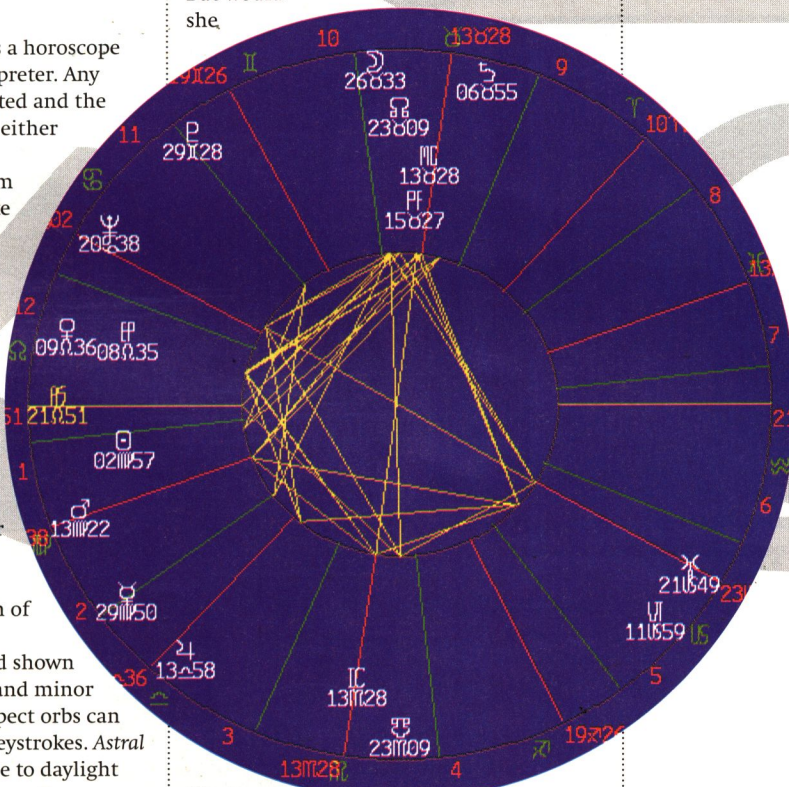
So what career does Astro suggest for our short Austrian with a strong sense of destiny? 'Provided your Part of Fortune is not afflicted, you would be successful in areas related to fish, the sea, oil and beverages. You might do well in areas connected with places of confinement such as mental hospitals, prisons, or hospitals and rest homes.'

The summary indicates that Hitler was 'a well-balanced person... well aware of his inner needs and knowing how to take care of them.'

Shareware from: Christopher J. Noyes

Registration: \$39.95 (Lite), \$54.95 (Deluxe) or \$119.95 (Professional)

Needs: Any compatible; display from Hercules to VGA



like to be told 'You are driven by your interest in making money. You demand that you be paid well and seek careers which will pay you well'. How much do nuns get? Or how about 'Your Fifth House Cusp is 19 Sagittarius. You have a happy-go-lucky attitude toward love and romance. Though you are ardent, you don't get involved too easily. You enjoy gambling and are usually pretty lucky...

The whole thing is somewhat less accurate than the much lamented Bobby Zillion. Let's see how it fares with our other



Numerology

SO MUCH FOR the stars. Another silly form of divination is numerology. By *The Numbers* by Rosemary West claims to 'Use the philosophy of Numerology to analyse your name and birth date for their symbolic meaning and metaphysical vibrations, giving you a complete personality profile.' Okay, let's try our subjects again.

First, Mother Teresa:

Ganxhe Bojaxhiu - Tuesday, 1 March, 1994

Date of Birth: 27/08/1910

GANXHE = 5

AGNES = 1

BOJAXHIU = 9

Cornerstone = 7

Number Frequencies in your name:

Expression = 5

Instinctive Desire = 4, 5 occurrences of 1

Personality = 2, 1 occurrences of 2

Your Birth Number = 9, 1 occurrences of 3

Your Destiny Number = 1, 0

occurrences of 4

Your Forecast Number for 1979 = 7, 4

cities, are especially soothing to you at this time...You may find your career in a temporary standstill... Depression could be a risk.' Her lucky numbers are nine, five, one, seven and 11 and her lucky colours are red and pink.

What about our other contestant? 'ADOLF adds up to number two. The two is characterised by a peaceful and co-operative nature. Its strengths are in diplomacy, culture, and charm. Its weaknesses are indecisiveness, shyness and passivity.' A bit off beam here, surely? 'You will probably be attracted to a career that allows you to work in harmony

GEOMANCY Version 4.01									
THE MOTHERS:					THE WITNESSES:				
	M4	M3	M2	M1		W2	W1		
1. ALBUS	**	**	**	**	1. CAUDA DRACONIS	*	*		
2. POPULUS	**	**	**	**	2. PUELLA	*	*		
3. LAETITIA	*	*	*	*		*	*		
4. RUBEUS	**	**	**	**		**	**		
THE DAUGHTERS:					THE JUDGE:				
	D4	D3	D2	D1					
1. ALBUS	**	*	**	**	ACQUISITIO	**	*		
2. TRISTITIA	**	*	**	**		*	*		
3. LAETITIA	**	*	**	**		*	*		
4. POPULUS	**	*	**	**		*	*		
THE NEPHEWS:					THE RECONCILER:				
	N4	N3	N2	N1					
1. ALBUS	**	**	**	**	CAPUT DRACONIS	**	*		
2. FORTUNA MINOR	**	**	**	**		*	*		
3. FORTUNA MAJOR	*	*	*	*		*	*		
4. LAETITIA	**	**	**	**		*	*		
LIFE EXPECTANCY FOR SOMEONE									
I>INTERPRET, <S>AVE, E<X>IT									
UNREGISTERED COPY									

BY THE NUMBERS Version 4.54 UNREGISTERED
Completed reading for GANXHE BOJAXHIU

GANXHE = 5
AGNES = 1
BOJAXHIU = 9
Cornerstone = 7
Expression = 5
Desire = 4
Personality = 2
Your Birth Number = 9
Your Destiny Number = 1
Your FORECAST NUMBER for 1979 = 7
Master number = 11

Number Frequencies in Your Name:

5 occurrences of 1
1 occurrences of 2
1 occurrences of 3
4 occurrences of 5
3 occurrences of 6
2 occurrences of 7
2 occurrences of 8
1 occurrences of 9

Planes of Temperament & Power:

Mental: 7
Emotional: 5
Physical: 4
Intuitive: 3

<S>AVE THESE NUMBERS, <I>NTERPRET, <P>RINT, E<X>IT TO MAIN MENU

occurrences of 5; 3 occurrences of 6
Master Number = 11, 2 occurrences of 7; 2 occurrences of 8
Planes of power: 1 occurrence of 9
Physical = 4
Mental = 7
Emotional = 5
Intuitive = 3
What does this mean? That 'You would like to be a great humanitarian, and your instincts are in the right place'. Sounds all right so far. But 'GANXHE is a five. The five's strengths lie in its adaptability, curiosity, and spontaneity. Its weaknesses are lack of commitment, a gambling nature, and impatience... You are warm, sensuous, and energetic. Your most romantic days are Sunday and Tuesday, especially in months beginning with 'A'. Monday is a low energy day for you, and January is a slow month.' What about 1979, when she received the Nobel Peace Prize? '1979 is a year that will emphasize inner growth for you ... Peaceful, natural settings, away from crowds and

with others, perhaps as a liaison between groups or in a position of offering hospitality. Your easy-going nature balances a tendency to be hypersensitive or petty about details. People are drawn to your quiet charm and modest appearance.' And 1945? The year he blew out his brains 30 years too late? '1945 is a year that will emphasise inner growth for you. You will have the opportunity to increase your spiritual wisdom and to develop intellectual pursuits. Peaceful, natural settings, away from crowds and cities, are especially soothing to you at this time...' Exactly the same as the forecast for Mother Teresa's more successful year. His lucky numbers were two, five and one, and his lucky colours were white and pale green.

Shareware from: Rosemary West

Registration: \$29.00

Needs: DOS 2.0 or later; 640K RAM

Geomancy

ROSEMARY WEST returns to the fray with Geomancy. She describes it as 'an ancient system of divination with a touch of blackmagic.' Fair enough, Rosemary. Let's see what you're made of:

'Area of inquiry: life expectancy for Adolf Hitler

Fortuna Major in the first house predicts long life and good health. You are kind-hearted and generous. Your physical appearance is one of sturdiness.'

Let's try something else:

'Area of inquiry: information on

Robert Maxwell's financial status

You are inclined to be slender, and probably have light hair. If you are male, you look good in a small beard. You are open-minded and have a pleasant personality. You don't like hard work. A short trip will be enjoyable. There may be some very minor legal matters to be handled, or perhaps a small disagreement with neighbours - nothing that will cause serious trouble. You have no active enemies at this time.'

One last try: how much money has Mother Teresa got?

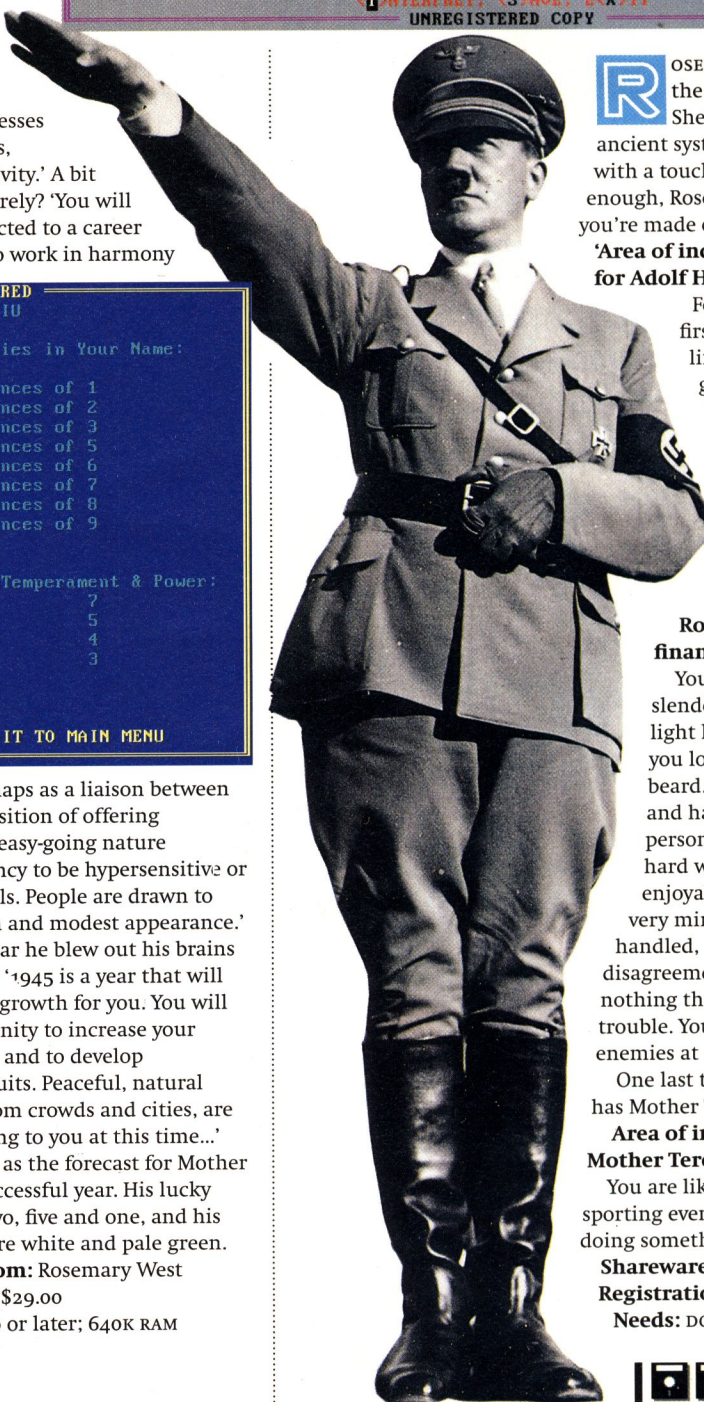
Area of inquiry: info. on Mother Teresa's financial status

You are likely to win a bet on a sporting event, or to be paid for doing something you enjoy.

Shareware from: Rosemary West

Registration: \$29.00

Needs: DOS 2.0 or later; 640K RAM



I Ching

THE ANCIENT Chinese system of divination and philosophy. If you don't want to throw and count yarrow sticks, let the computer do it.

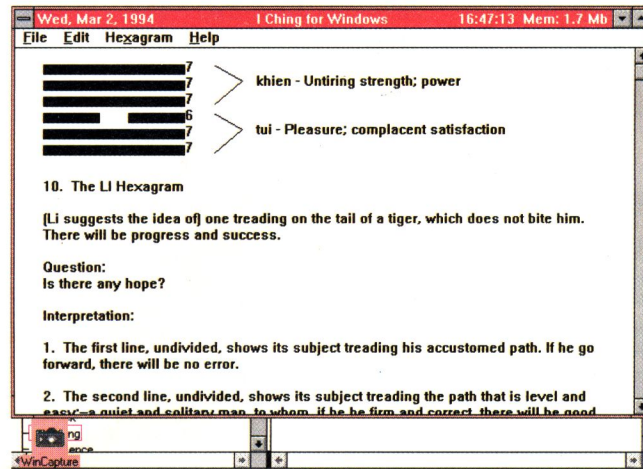
I Ching For Windows

Here's a surprise: the best of the lot is *I Ching For Windows* from Eric Bergman-Terrell, the man who writes all those astronomy programs. *I Ching* does a good job of explaining things. The program generates 'chance' hexagrams, or you can choose your own.

Shareware from: Eric Bergman-Terrell

Registration: £20.00

Needs: Windows



Biorhythms

ANOTHER PSEUDO-scientific idea. Your emotional, physical and mental prowess fluctuate over the days. Biorhythms is a way of finding your best day for lifting coal, doing the crossword or falling in love. You could always ask yourself 'do I feel up to this?' and save a lot of graph paper, but you will miss the fun of ringing up the dentist and saying 'must cancel the appointment; my computer says I'm at a low'.

Biorhythm

Biorhythm by Eric Fogelin is pretty, but no more accurate than any of the other packages. On 10 September 1946, when Mother Theresa received her call from God, she was intellectually at her lowest. On 30 April 1945, when Hitler shot himself, he

Tarot

Tarot cards are merely the ancestors of modern playing cards. The Tarot pack dates back to about the 12th century (certainly no earlier) and the earliest surviving pack dates from 1392. The register of the Chambre des Comptes records a payment to Jacquemin Gringonneur for three games of cards 'in gold and diverse colours, ornamented with many devices, for the diversion of our lord, the King.' 17 of these cards survive in the Bibliothèque Nationale. We would recognise them as the original Tarot set, the 22 cards that became the Major Arcana.

The Tarot arrived first in France, and it was France that first abandoned it for the

Death, the Sun, the Moon and so forth; the cards are numbered 1 - XXI with the 22nd card, the fool, being unnumbered.

Cartomancy is the art of divination by cards. Any pack can be used. The first main book on the subject is *Le Ingeniose Sorte* by Francesco Marcolini da Forli published in Venice in 1550.

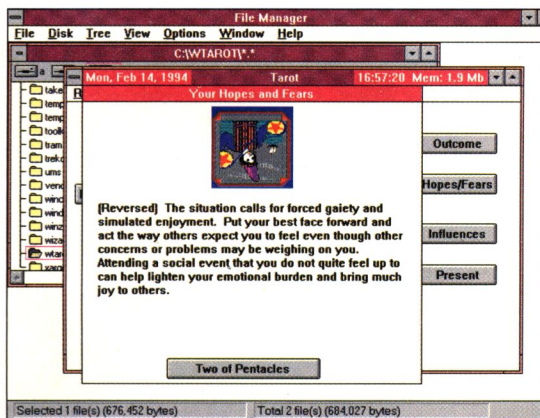
Personal Tarot

As you might have guessed by now, the indefatigable Rosemary West has had a go at this too. Unfortunately, her *Personal Tarot* doesn't have pictures, just a description of what would be on the cards if you could see them. Still, the program runs on low spec.

Shareware from: Rosemary West

Registration: \$29.00

Needs: DOS 2.0 or later, and 640K RAM



pattern of playing cards that we have today. The Tarot as a pattern of playing cards survives, particularly in Italy where the game of Minchiate is still played.

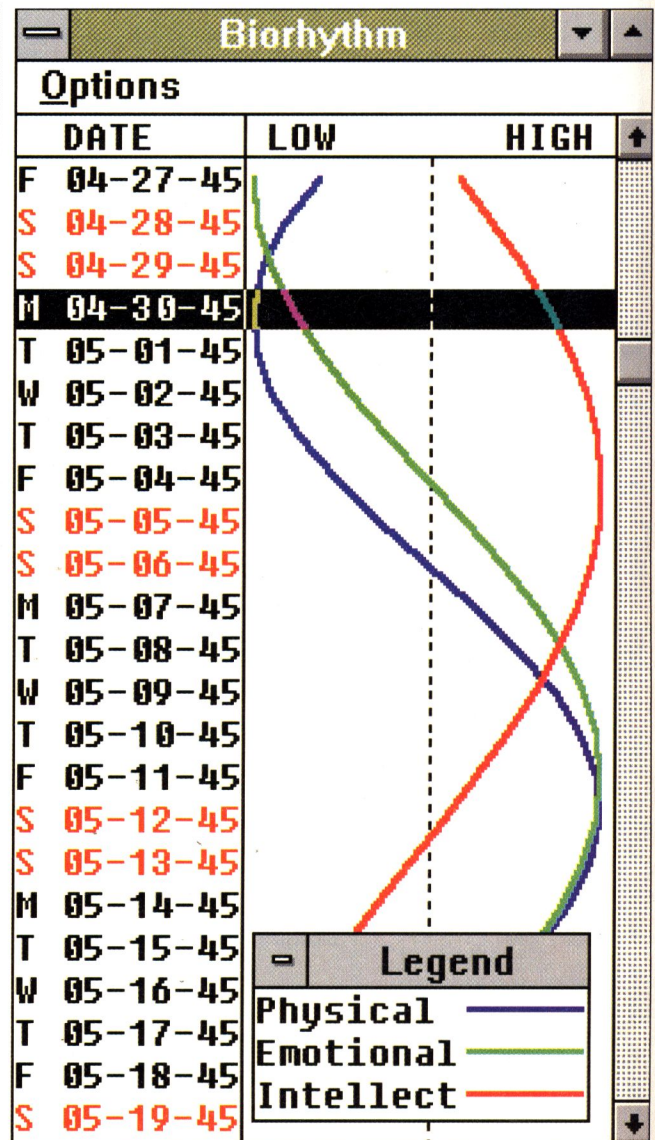
The Tarot is divided into the major and the minor Arcana. The minor Arcana is like a modern pack with four suits: Cups (hearts), Swords (spades), Pentacles (Diamonds) and Batons (Clubs). There is an additional court card, the knight, which brings the number up to 56. The other 22 cards are the Major Arcana. These are the cards that are based on legends, folklore and religion. There is the Pope, the Devil,

out that 'this program in no way endorses any belief in the occult and is intended for amusement only'. It was written 'to aid the Vietnamese refugee children without parents who are in refugee camps in the Philippines'. Any donations to the Centre for Aid to Displaced Persons will be most gratefully received.

Shareware from: Anthony Nguyen

Registration: Whatever you can afford

Needs: Windows



Hitler at an emotional low as he marries Eva Braun and reaches for his pistol.

was at an intellectual high.

Shareware from: Eric Fogelin

Registration: Whatever you can afford

Needs: Windows

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Dragon Shard version 2.1b

is a mouse-controlled EGA role-playing adventure game in the *Ultima* style. It's designed to expand in a 'modular' fashion so that when you have completed the quests in this introductory module you can continue your adventures in other modules. Features ten character races, 17 character classes, magic items and spells, interaction with monsters and non-player characters, hundreds of weapons, potions and herbs, shops, and much more. Shareware version restricts adventurers to the fifth level of experience.

● Order ref: B3866

Monster Bash

is a VGA resolution platform-jumping arcade game from Apogee in the tradition of their best-selling *Commander Keen* and *Cosmo* games. Johnny Dash must use his catapult to repel undead monsters in his quest to free stolen pet dogs and cats held by the evil Count Chuck. Johnny can climb, crawl, shoot his catapult, fly a broom and much more.

● Order ref: BH212

Ken's Labyrinth

is a 3D 256-colour VGA arcade adventure game. You have been captured by the Zogarians and must escape their labyrinth in order to rescue your dog Sparky and save the known Universe. Supports Gravis Gamepad control, and a musical soundtrack with Ad-Lib

or Sound Blaster cards.

● Order ref: BH218

The Blade Runner Disk version 1.1

for film fans includes a *Blade Runner* quiz program with four levels of difficulty; a Wilbur Mercer simulator; random quotes program; 514 x 463 greyscale image of Rachael; 432 x 718 and 784 x 458 2-colour images of the film poster; plus a text file of *Blade Runner* information, including cuts and continuity errors in the film. (Public Domain disk)

● Order ref: B3747(1)

NOTE: Shareware entitles you to try before you buy. Registration costs are usually a fraction of comparable commercial software and they also entitle you to documentation, user support and upgrades.

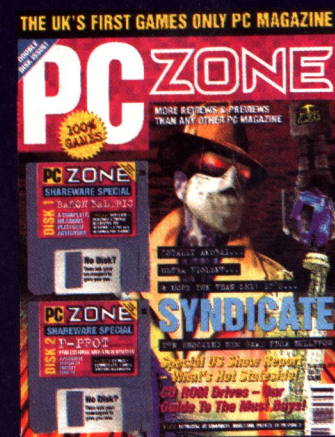


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Mr Cursor

HE'S AFRAID OF HIS PC*

*(and 'pop' supergroups, and octopuses, and, er...)

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Australian soaps are big, big news in the States – especially the one set in Summer bay. If you want proof then here's the back of the box of a PC game called *Pro League Football*. Believe me now?

the competition try to tackle the features:

- True modem play with Chat Mode.
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- Real NFL logos, real NFL players...real NFL Football!

your own league or use pre-



BEFORE getting onto the main subject I just want to ask you a question. Here's the prob. I was looking at an early version of Bullfrog's forthcoming game, *Creation* (their first-person perspective underwater jobbie), when I suddenly found myself thinking about that old tv series, *The Undersea World Of Jacques Cousteau*. 'So what?' you may say. Well, for some strange reason I actually remembered a snippet of an episode I saw when I was about nine or ten. Anyway, the point is that the vividly-recalled antique snippet in question was of Jacques Cousteau facing the camera and aiming a question directly at the tv audience (or just at me, as I naively thought at the time). Here's what he said: 'Do octopuses 'ave orgasms?' In fact I can hear the heavy French accent even now, as I'm writing this: 'Do octopuses 'ave orgasms?'

Now, it's certainly possible, given my foggy memory and the passing of time, that it was purely a rhetorical question which led onto a completely unconnected item about puffer fish or electric eels or fiddler crabs or something. But I somehow doubt it. No, I reckon it must have been part of the intro of an episode – an episode which then dedicated itself to finding out whether or not octopuses actually did (or didn't) have orgasms. The trouble is, I'm buggered if I can remember the conclusion. So there we go. I know they've got eight arms, I know they've got 'beaks', I know they can change colour at will, I know they go all squidgy and get smaller when you take them out of water and I know they can squirt inky fluid when threatened – but I still don't know if octopuses actually experience a sexual climax. It's a nightmare. And so here's where you come in. Maybe you remember the programme itself, and can recall the ending. Or maybe you're a marine biologist. Or maybe you're simply some sort of pervert who once tried an 'experiment' while on holiday in Crete. Whatever, I really don't care. I have to know, so please help. (And there's even a coupon, so it couldn't be easier.)

But enough about octopuses, and on to supergroups. Remember supergroups? I'm talking like around the Band Aid era, the late '80s, when you'd get, say, Phil Collins and Genesis teaming up with Bananarama, Eric Clapton, Chris Rea and Duran Duran to produce a so-called mega-mix of some God-awful Meatloaf 'classic'. Yeah? Or Tina Turner, Elton John, George Michael, Phil Collins and bastard Eric Clapton (again) teaming up with The Pet Shop Boys in order to wail out a rendition from Hell of T'Pau's *China In Your Hand* (with Linda McCartney on triangle). You'll recall the nightmare, and will also know that (thankfully) the craze has died out – although admittedly Bryan Adams, Rod Stewart and Sting were recently drawn together like three small blobs of shite in a water-filled bathtub. But hey, that's 'pop music', and we're here to talk about pc games.

The thing is, that when we come down to games, maybe supergroups aren't actually such a bad idea. Let me elaborate, and take *Elite II* as an example. (And yes, I know I whinged about *Elite II* a couple of issues ago, but it's a perfect subject matter. Oh, and I know that the

cost of hiring loads of different programming teams would be restrictive – but it can be overlooked due to this whole thing being a 'thought experiment' in which capital is no problem. Oh, and seeing as it's a thought experiment, let's make some money for charity while we're at it.) So *Elite II* then, as produced by a charitable supergroup.

David Braben: Look, I've got seven squillion stars, 400,000 billion trillion zillion planets, all the orbits work, all the spaceship maths are totally correct and the whole shooting match still only takes up half a megabyte of hard disk space. What's your problem?

Origin: Er, well, we've got lots of spare stills, some 'guru' shading and some digitised speech (which only uses 39 megabytes!)

The Star Control Bods: And we've got some even better stills, a script that's actually amusing and some brilliant music to boot.

David Braben: (Silence)

The Star Control Bods: ...Um, and we're prepared to donate 93% of our earnings to charity.

David Braben: Hmmm...

Stunt Island Posse: We could help out a bit with the polygons, and the update speed... and the charity too, come to that.

X-Wing Crew: And we could lend a hand with the space combat – we won't interfere with the realism, we'll make the whole thing more fun, and we'll boost those charity coffers to the max.

ID Software: We'll make it so you can walk about inside the spaceships, and have to get into the suspended animation tank during hyperspace jumps. We're thinking hand weapons, too! *Alien!* *Aliens 2.* *Aliens 3.* And charity!

Paul Woakes: Has anyone played my game *Damocles*? Enter buildings on planets' surfaces and so on? I'll go with id if they'll let me, even though I am but a tic in their anal fluff. I'll even work for free.

David Braben: And meanwhile virtually all of our money is going to charity... to the poor blind orphans in Sarajevo and Angola!

Get the idea? Gameplay-wise you'll have thought along similar lines yourself, I don't doubt, but I bet you never thought about throwing this last bit in. (Which is where I, Mr Cursor, join the fictional supergroup for the final, masterly, addition...)

Mr Cursor: Right, let's make one of the five zillion squillion planets a pure 'ocean planet'. Just water. Well hidden and extremely hard to get to, this planet must be populated solely by octopuses... and they're all having a multiple orgasm.

All: Hoorah!

OCTOPUSES AND ORGASMS

I, (Name)

of (Address)
can happily inform Mr Cursor that octopuses do/don't* have orgasms.

*(DELETE WHERE APPLICABLE)

HOW I KNOW (Tick box)

I know that octopuses do/don't* have orgasms due to the fact that:

- ☐ I remember the ending of the Jacques Cousteau programme
- ☐ I am a marine biologist, specialising in octopus reproduction
- ☐ I am a Cretian pervert

☐ Other

(Left) An artist's impression of the most popular Home And Away jersey of this season... Sam, Greg and the recently-deceased Bobby.

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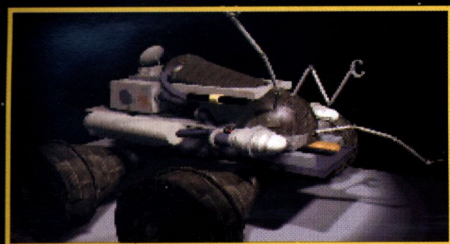
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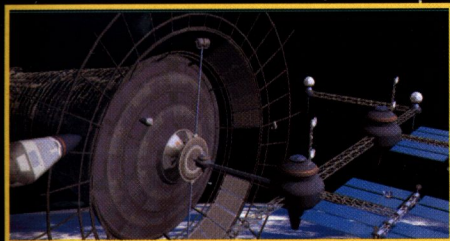
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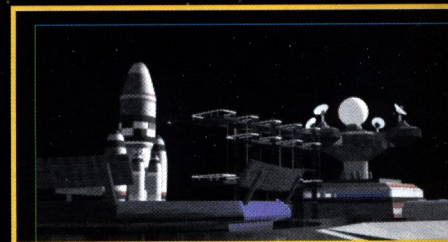
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TFX

R
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PC PLAYER



PC ACTION

90%

PC ZONE

CLASSIC 90%

PC REVIEW

9/10

PC HOME

91%



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